

THE
Invisible Spy.

BY
EXPLORALIBUS,
VOL. II.



L O N D O N:

Printed for T. GARDNER, at *Cowley's Head*,
near *St. Clement's Church* in the *Strand*.

M,D,CC,LV.

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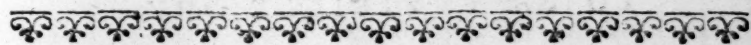
THE
Invisible Spy.



V O L. II.



B O O K III.



C H A P. I.

In which the author introduces himself to the public by some letters he has received from unrequested correspondents, and the answers he gives to them.



HO' I am very certain of the honour and strict probity of my editor, and believe he employs none, especially in any thing relating to the press, but such whose integrity may be depended upon,
VEL. II. B yet,

yet, I know not how it is, but the title of this work has, by some means or other, taken air, and I perceive has sounded an alarm in the ears of those who blush to be told of what they do not blush to act; for before the first volume was near half completed several letters from different hands were left for me at the Printing-Office; some of which I think it highly proper to insert, as I have no other way of communicating my sentiments to the authors of them, and shall leave it to the public to judge impartially between us.

LETTER I.

To the INVISIBLE SPY.

Mr. INVISIBLE,

“ I Am a fair enemy, and scorn to cut
 “ any man’s throat without first tel-
 “ ling him I intend to do so:—I therefore
 “ send this before the publication of
 “ your book, to give you warning not
 “ to put any thing into it that may affront
 “ the honourable society of Bucks, of
 “ which I am not only a member but at
 “ present the President.—What if we ap-
 “ pear a little terrible to silly people, and
 “ sometimes, for sport’s sake, overturn a
 “ chaise, or jostle an old man or insigni-
 “ ficant woman into the kennel, beat the
 “ watch,

“ watch, break the windows of houses,
“ or rob the watchmen of their lant-
“ horns; we look upon ourselves as ab-
“ solute fovereigns of all public places,
“ and will not suffer a reprimand from
“ any paultry scribbler of you all; for
“ whatever we may happen to do, either
“ on the Road, in the Mall, or the
“ Street;—take notice also, that the least
“ provocation offer’d to any one of us
“ incurs the resentment of the whole
“ body, and we have unanimously sworn
“ to make a dreadful example of you if
“ found culpable this way; — hope not
“ to escape, — we shall trace you to your
“ lurking-hole, — pluck off your case of
“ Invisibibility, and hack you into atoms;
“ — vengeance is the word, — mark
“ that, and tremble how you offend

“ A BUCK.

In answer to this terrible gentleman I shall only say, that tho’ I am no friend to fighting, especially with horned animals, yet I am not coward enough to be so far intimidated by his menaces as to erase any thing I have once wrote; if therefore he finds nothing in this work concerning the fraternity of which he boasts being a member, he may assure himself that it is merely because I look on all the adventures they are engaged in, as too low

and too trifling for the entertainment of my readers.

LETTER II.

To the AUTHOR of the INVISIBLE SPY.

“SIR,

“**T**HERE are a set of men about
 “this town who pick up a pretty
 “tolerable living by inspecting into the
 “secrets of the press;—they are a sort of
 “Spies as well as yourself, and as Invi-
 “sible as you can pretend to be;—they
 “find means to steal the title of every
 “new book long before it is advertised,
 “and almost as soon as the letters which
 “form it are put together by the compo-
 “sitor, it is by one of those very useful
 “persons I am informed of the work you
 “have in hand, and being apprehensive
 “that it may contain some things which
 “had much better be conceal’d than
 “made known, I take the liberty to offer
 “you my sentiments upon it, previous
 “to the publication, in order that you
 “may make such alterations, as on hear-
 “ing my reasons, you shall find necessary
 “and proper,

“In the first place, sir, I would have
 “you consider, that whatever is bad either
 “in

“ in the affairs of private families or in
“ national concerns, may possibly be made
“ much worse, but can never be amended
“ by being exposed ; — ill fortune, let it
“ come in what shape it will, can get
“ nothing by complaints but a short-lived
“ pity ; and when that is over, insults
“ and contempt are sure to ensue :—it is
“ prudence, therefore, to make a good
“ appearance as long as we can ; and,
“ according to the vulgar adage, let the
“ evil day take care for its self.

“ It is with great propriety that writers
“ who presume to cavil, and find fault
“ with the management of those at the
“ helm, are compared to curs barking at
“ the Moon ; for the Ad—m—n, like
“ that planet, secure in its own height,
“ despising all arrows shot from the in-
“ ferior world, moves on in the same
“ uninterrupted course it has begun, and
“ will continue to do so, except some
“ sudden revolution should happen among
“ the stars, and the disposition of nature
“ be entirely chang’d.

“ What avails, therefore, all these in-
“ vectives that from time to time have
“ been thrown out against the ministry ?
“ — this presuming to canvas every bill
“ brought into parliament, and grumb-

“ling at them after being enacted into
 “laws, since, in spite of all that can
 “be said or wrote, things will be as
 “they are?—The wise of all ages agree,
 “that happiness is seated in content, and
 “if this be true, the good people of
 “England need only think themselves
 “happy, to be so. —This fortunate æra
 “might presently arrive, if the com-
 “monality would once cease affecting to
 “be thought politicians, and every one
 “say with mr. Pope,

In spite of pride, unerring reason's spite,
 One truth is clear, — whatever is, — is
 right.

“But to come to the point;—you must
 “know, sir, I have the honour of a
 “seat in the present parliament, and
 “hope to have the same in the ensuing
 “one; but being conscious of having
 “been pretty strenuous in bringing about
 “some things not very popular, parti-
 “cularly the bill in relation to the Na-
 “turalization of the Jews, I should be
 “glad to have that matter brought as
 “little as possible upon the tapis;—not
 “that I fear being rechosen,—but it will
 “cost me more money;—you understand
 “me; — my constituents will sell their
 “voices at a much higher price; and, it
 “may

“ may be, some few of them not be pre-
“ vail’d upon to sell at all.

“ I earnestly desire therefore, that if
“ you mention any thing of this affair, it
“ may be wholly in favour of the Israelies;
“ — set up the law of Moses in opposi-
“ tion to the rules of Christianity; — it
“ will be easy for you to prove your argu-
“ ment by quotations out of some inge-
“ nious pamphlets publish’d within these
“ few years: — your compliance with this
“ request will oblige me to recommend
“ your book among all my friends, and
“ to do to you every other good office
“ in the power of,

“ SIR,

“ Your most humble

“ and obedient servant,

“ JUDAICUS.”

I am sorry this gentleman has given himself the trouble to write so long a letter to so little purpose; — I am a very old-fashion’d fellow, I revere the old testament, but endeavour to act according to the precepts of the new, so consequently can be no friend to the profess’d enemies of it:—I shall take care, however, not to

offend any member of the honourable house of commons; — I shall be so wise, at least while I keep in remembrance the fate of M—y.

LETTER III.

To the INVISIBLE SPY.

S I R,

“ I Am shock’d and scandalized beyond
 “ measure at your title, and so I be-
 “ lieve is every body else that hears it:—
 “ What but the very Devil incarnate can
 “ have tempted you to assume one so un-
 “ gracious to all degrees of people? —
 “ An Invisible Spy! — why, it is a cha-
 “ racter more to be dreaded than an
 “ Excise, a Custom-house or a Sheriff’s
 “ Officer; — nay, than even a King’s
 “ Messenger: — human prudence has
 “ taught us to elude the scrutiny of all
 “ known examiners; but who can guard
 “ against what they do not see? — You
 “ may be at our very elbows without our
 “ knowing you are; — you may explore
 “ all the necessary arts and mysteries of
 “ our several avocations, without our
 “ having it in our power to bribe you to
 “ secrecy:—What therefore can you ex-
 “ pect, as there is no other way of deal-
 “ ing with you, but to have your book
 “ damn’d

“ damn’d the first moment of its publi-
“ cation; and to be plain with you, I,
“ who am an author as well as your-
“ self, have already, at the request of
“ some leading men, prepar’d a thing
“ for the press which will effectually do
“ your business? — As a brother of the
“ quill, however, thinking it becoming
“ in me to give you this timely notice,
“ and likewise to advise you to cancel
“ all such pages, as upon a strict exami-
“ nation you shall find may possibly be
“ construed into a libel, — whether the
“ matters they contain are founded either
“ upon truth or fiction; — you know
“ very well, that the one is liable to the
“ same punishment as the other; with
“ this difference only, that the former
“ being the most stinging, is, generally
“ speaking, treated with the most seve-
“ rity; — I have heard some menaces
“ thrown out against you, and sincerely
“ wish you may escape the effects, and
“ meet with no other chastisement for
“ your folly, than what you will receive
“ from the pen of

“ SCRIBLERIUS.”

I shall defer giving my sentiments on
my brother author’s doughty epistle, till
I find myself oblig’d to declare them in
an answer to the treatise with which he

threatens me, as one trouble will suffice for both.

LETTER IV.

From a lady to the INVISIBLE SPY.

S I R,

“ S Everal of my acquaintance have
 “ taken it into their heads, I suppose
 “ not without special information, that
 “ there is a book coming out under the
 “ title I have prefix’d to this letter ; — if
 “ there be in reality any such work in the
 “ press, I take the liberty of telling the
 “ author, that I hope he has more good
 “ sense and good manners than to pry into
 “ the secrets of our sex, much less to fol-
 “ low the example of a late writer in ex-
 “ posing to the world what he may hap-
 “ pen to find in some of our dressing-
 “ rooms, cabinets, and private alcoves.
 “ — Suppose a woman has the misfortune
 “ to like another man better than her
 “ husband, — pawns her jewels to pay her
 “ debts at play, — or is in the books of her
 “ mercer, laceman, and milliner, beyond
 “ her utmost ability to clear ? — these are
 “ all of them foibles which ought to be
 “ excused, as they are the fashion, and
 “ one should be look’d upon as a creature
 “ of the last age to be wholly free from ;
 “ — so,

“ —so, dear Invisible, I would have you
“ consider, that the want of politeness in
“ your sex is much more ridiculous than
“ the want of chastity and œconomy is in
“ ours : — flattery and homage are the
“ privilege of womankind, and if a fa-
“ ther, an uncle, or a brother, assumes to
“ himself the right of correcting any
“ mistakes we are guilty of, we are sure
“ to hate him for it in our hearts ; — if
“ therefore there be any one of us whom
“ you would wish to be well with, you
“ must conceal the faults of the rest.

“ Yours, &c.

“ ERRONIA.”

I am afraid that I shall have but a very indifferent chance for a place in the good graces of this lady ; but as there are others, I hope the greatest number, of an opposite way of thinking, I shall the more easily console myself.

LETTER V.

TO the INVISIBLE SPY.

“ Mr. INVISIBLE,

“ **N**othing is more absurd in effect,
“ than for people to take all oppor-
“ tunities of railing against that which they

“ are continually practising ;—the article
“ of gaming is so popular a subject, that
“ tho’ you may like the amusement as
“ well as any body, I scarce doubt but
“ to satyrize it makes some part of your
“ lucubrations ; but how bold soever you
“ may be with the sweetners and common
“ gamblers, who have no other depen-
“ dance for their bread, I would have
“ you beware how you meddle with per-
“ sons of rank and fortune : — if by my
“ address in the turning of a card I win
“ five hundred or a thousand pieces of a
“ fellow who has the vanity to imagine
“ he has as much skill as myself, it is
“ only for the pleasure of circumventing,
“ and then laughing at him, not through
“ the love of lucre :—no, I would have
“ you know, sir, I scorn money, and
“ only put it in my pocket till I can
“ find a proper object to bestow it upon,
“ and the next needy woman of the town
“ I come in company with, toss the fool’s
“ pence into her lap ;—or perhaps set half
“ a dozen of the poor devils a scrambling
“ for it : — I remember that one night,
“ in very cold weather too, I made a
“ whole covey of them strip naked as
“ they were born, and run galloping
“ the whole length of Pall-Mall after
“ seven or eight hundred moidores I
“ threw out of a tavern window.—If you
“ pretend

“ pretend these are not generous actions
“ you will be thought a silly old Put
“ and your book not worth a farthing.
“ — So no more from

“ Yours,

“ As I shall find you deserve,

“ RAKELOVE.”

If mr. Rakelove's letter had reached my hands before these volumes were completed, it might have saved me the trouble of exposing the business of cheating at play, by having done it so effectually himself.

LETTER VI.

To the INVISIBLE SPY.

SIR,

“ I Hear you are going to set forth a
“ new book, and from the title of it
“ have some reason to apprehend you will
“ be no less bitter in your expressions
“ than some others have been against a
“ nation which desires nothing more than
“ to live in the most perfect concord
“ and amity with yours, I beg leave to
“ expostulate a little with you on that
“ occasion.

“ I.

“ I thought you Christians valued
“ yourselves upon acts of benevolence,
“ charity, and good-will to all men; and
“ that to root out the seeds of envy and
“ malice from your hearts was a main
“ part of your religion;—Wherefore then
“ is all this rancour against the Hebrews?
“ — How can you profess the least true
“ regard for Abraham, or any of the Pa-
“ triarchs, when you grumble to admit
“ their posterity as fellow-citizens within
“ your walls? — How can you place the
“ venerable portraitures of Moses and
“ Aaron in your temples, yet grudge that
“ the people they deliver’d from the house
“ of bondage should share with you in
“ the milk and honey of your land? —
“ What if we crucified the man you
“ worship as your God? — What if we
“ disbelieve and ridicule the miracles you
“ ascribe to him, deny his resurrection,
“ and in our synagogues utter some
“ things which you call blasphemy, our
“ principles, in matters of faith, have no
“ relation to those of loyalty to the king
“ or social conversation with our neigh-
“ bours? — We can be as good sub-
“ jects and as merry companions as any
“ Christian of you all; — the want of
“ either of these virtues cannot be im-
“ puted to us.

“ There

“ There are many of you, indeed, I
“ believe the greatest number, who put
“ religion quite out of the question, and
“ yet cry out that their rights and pro-
“ perties will be invaded; that when
“ once we have the liberty of being in-
“ corporated with you, such numbers of
“ us will flock hither from all parts of
“ the world, that we shall, by degrees, en-
“ gross all the trade of the kingdom;
“ to which I answer,—that if we should
“ do so, the fault will be wholly in your-
“ selves;—if you work and sell as cheap
“ as we do, you will have the same
“ chance for business;—and as for those
“ who shall be obliged to shut up their
“ shops, they will always find employ-
“ ment among us, either as journeymen
“ or menial servants:—a taylor or a
“ barber would make a good valet de
“ chambre; a merchant, a wine-cooper,
“ a vintner, or a distiller, could not fail
“ of being an excellent butler;—a jewel-
“ ler, a goldsmith, a mercer, a haber-
“ dasher, a woollen or a linnen-draper,
“ would be a spruce footman:—in fine,
“ there is no one person, of any occupa-
“ tion whatever, that might not, if he is
“ not too proud or too lazy, earn his
“ bread under our hospitable roofs.

As

“ As you are an author, I must believe you to be a man of sense, and therefore flatter myself that the arguments I have alledg’d will have some weight with you. — I am,

“ With all due respect,

“ SIR,

“ Your most obedient

“ humble servant,

“ SHIMEI BENZARA.”

My answer to Benzara may be found in the return I made to the letter of Judaicus, so I have only to thank this considerative and beneficent Hebrew for the handsome provision he proposes for the trading part of my countrymen, tho’ I hope they never will have occasion to accept it.

LETTER VII.

To the INVISIBLE SPY.

“ Honour’d sir,

“ **B**EING told you are a very extraordinary person, and can see every
“ thing

“ thing and not be seen yourself, it is
“ likely that chance or design may some
“ time or other bring you to my house ;
“ as I live in a genteel part of the town,
“ keep several servants, and am visited
“ by people of the best fashion and re-
“ pute.

“ You must know, sir, that I pass for
“ a well jointur'd widow, but in reality
“ was never married in my life, and
“ have no other dependance than the fa-
“ vour of some worthy gentlemen and
“ ladies, who I frequently oblige with a
“ bed at the moderate rate of three
“ guineas per night.

“ Among the rest of my good custo-
“ mers there are two sisters of distinction,
“ who have each of them their particu-
“ lar favourites, and always meet them at
“ my house ;—one of them is married to
“ a man who is as jealous of her as the
“ devil ; and if he should get the least
“ intimation of her intrigue, and that I
“ am privy to it, he would blow me up
“ and ruin me for ever.

“ I therefore beg and beseech you, sir,
“ that if you make any discoveries of
“ this nature, you will not divulge it to
“ any soul in the world, much less not
“ put

“ put it into your book ; and in return
 “ for this favour, be assured that you,
 “ and any friend you shall bring with
 “ you, shall be welcome to the best ap-
 “ partment in my house, with a hot
 “ boil’d chicken and a bottle of wine in-
 “ to the bargain. — I am,

“ Depending on your honour,

“ SIR,

“ Your most devoted

“ humble servant,

“ SUSANNA PRIM.”

This good gentlewoman’s request is come too late to be comply’d with ;—she will find, however, if her avocation allows her time for the perusal of these volumes, that I have carefully avoided making any mischief in families.

I have also receiv’d another letter from a young lady, too tedious and too little interesting to be presented to the public, so I shall only give the heads of it, with my opinion on the matter it contains.

She is very pressing with me to clear her reputation, which, as she says, suffers much in the world without being guilty
 of

of any real crime ; but by the account she gives of herself, even tho' she should be as perfectly innocent in fact as she pretends, and as I hope she is, I can see very little merit in the virtue she so much boasts of, much less expect that any thing I can urge will put to silence the censures she complains of.

When a young woman, well born, genteely bred, and accustom'd in her childhood to converse with persons of condition, can condescend to keep company, and appear in all public places with the meanest and most abandon'd of her own sex, and suffer herself to be treated in taverns by those of the other with whom she had no acquaintance, nor had ever seen before, what can be alledg'd in vindication of her delicacy, her prudence, or her modesty ?

She says that her father, in his last moments, put a dagger into her hands, with a strict charge to keep and use it in defence of her chastity if attack'd ; but does not add that she ever had any occasion for exerting the heroine in this manner ;—so it seems to me that in the numberless dangers she confesses to have provok'd, she must have been indebted for protection merely to chance, or to an un-
common

common share either of honour, or coldness of constitution in the men with whom she entrusted herself.

Upon the whole, all that can be said in her favour is, that want of thought, the love of pleasure, and variety of company, betray'd her into a conduct she too late sees and repents the folly of, and which will be better retrieved by a future regularity of behaviour than by any vain excuses for the past.

~~CONTENTS OF THE SECOND VOLUME~~

C H A P. II.

Contains the history of a very extraordinary funeral, and also of some other pretty particular occurrences which the author was witness of, in an Invisible visit he made to the most favourite part of the family of a lady of distinction.

I Frequently stroll thro' the town, with my Invisible Belt close girt about me, not always with a view of making any discoveries, but merely to enjoy the freedom of my thought, without being interrupted by the impertinent how-d'y's of
some

some who might meet and know me by day, and to be safe from the salutation of the stand and deliver, — investors of the street by night, with whom I was no less inclined to engage in combat, than I am to comply with their unreasonable and unjust demands.

In these unmeaning rambles I sometimes stumbled upon adventures no less entertaining than many of those I had sought after, and took so much pains to explore the hidden source of.

I will not, however, pretend to promise that this I am now about to recite is either so improving or so pleasing as several others presented to the public in this work ; but be that as it shall happen, — the candid reader will accept of things as they fell under my observation, and content himself with such as are less agreeable, for the sake of those he shall find much more to his taste.

- ‘ Even life a kind of chequer-work
- ‘ appears,
- ‘ A round of joy, of grief, of hopes,
- ‘ and fears ;

‘ The

- ‘ The good, the bad, the wife with
‘ patience bear,
- ‘ Welcome the former, and the latter
‘ dare.

MARSTON.

I was going through a narrow lane one day, and saw a great concourse of the meaner sort of people gather'd together about a little door, which then seem'd to me, and I afterwards found, was the avenue to some stables or coach-house; as I did not imagine that persons of the appearance these were could be assembled on any matter worthy of my attention, I should scarce have stopp'd to make any enquiry into it, if, just as I came near the place where they stood, they had not been join'd by some others, whose interrogatories awaken'd my curiosity.

The first that spoke was a broad ruddy-faced woman, with tatter'd garments, ungirt and loosely flowing, as was her hair, which hung down to her brows; — her heels the length of half a span behind her shoes; and, in fine, every mark about her that denoted her a true devotee to Bacchus, to whom, though it was scarce mid-day, and not the usual time for the performance of his rites, she had been plentifully sacrificing, in such liquor
as

as ladies of her rank are wont of late years to be regaled with ; — her words were these :

First Woman. ‘ What the devil’s to
‘ be done here ? — Is there any thing to
‘ be seen ?’

To this demand a robust fellow, who by his appearance I took to be a carman or a waggoner, reply’d in these terms :

First Man. ‘ Ay, marry, — the finest
‘ shew, by report, that ever you saw in
‘ your whole life, or may ever see again.’

Second Woman. ‘ What is it ?’

Third Woman. ‘ Why where have you
‘ liv’d, that you have not heard that one
‘ of lady Marvell’s dogs is dead, and lies
‘ in state till the burial ?’

One of the new comers, on this intelligence, clapp’d her hands and cry’d out :

Fourth Woman. ‘ Lord ! — Lord ! —
‘ a dog lie in state ; — what will this
‘ world come to ?’

Second Man. ‘ To no good I am
‘ afraid : — but these quality think they
‘ may

‘ may do any thing ; — if it had been a
 ‘ poor man’s child, I warrant it might
 ‘ lie above ground, and be sent to the
 ‘ parish for a grave, for any care her
 ‘ ladyship would take about it.’

Omnes. ‘ Ay, ay, so they might in-
 ‘ deed.’

An arch wag, who was an apprentice
 in the neighbourhood, on hearing what
 was said, thrust himself in among them,
 and in a sneering voice spoke thus :

Apprentice. ‘ Oh fye, you should treat
 ‘ a person of quality’s dog with more re-
 ‘ spect ; — besides, I have been told that
 ‘ the deceased was lineally descended, by
 ‘ the side of his dam, from a favourite
 ‘ bitch of Oliver Cromwell’s, who was
 ‘ lord protector of England, and that his
 ‘ fire came over from Holland with an
 ‘ officer belonging to the household of King
 ‘ William, of immortal memory.

Second Woman. ‘ What of all that, I
 ‘ am sure I lived servant in as worthy a
 ‘ family as any at all ; — they had a fine
 ‘ dog call’d Cæsar, he was of good king
 ‘ Charles’s breed,—every body lov’d him,
 ‘ he was such a gentle good-natur’d crea-
 ‘ ture ; — but they made no fuss about
 ‘ him

Than I received a letter requiring my attendance at a judge's chambers that same afternoon, at four o'clock, which was the very time in which it was reasonable to suppose Lysetta's new guest would be with her: — the affair I was sent for upon, however, was of too much consequence to be hazarded for the sake of satisfying an idle curiosity; but I do not remember I was ever more vexed in my whole life.

Having dispatched my business, which indeed happened somewhat sooner than I expected, I put on my Belt of Invisibility and went to the house of Lysetta; — I saw a chair waiting, but the door was shut, and I was obliged to stay in the street for a considerable time, I believe not less than an hour, before it was opened for any person, either to go in or out.

I got entrance at last, and passed directly to the dining-room, where I found the person I was desirous of beholding; — on my looking earnestly on him, I saw he had so much the resemblance of the picture drawn for him by the Fortune-teller, that I presently perceived she must be better acquainted with his features than the cups could make her, and that

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* See page 25th of 1st 3rd Vol.

in reality she was a marriage-broker, under the disguise of a coffee-grounds calculator.

He had placed himself very close to Lysetta on a settee, and must have been making a declaration of love to her by the answer she gave just as I came into the room.

Lysetta. ‘ Sir, it does not become
‘ me to hearken to any professions of
‘ this nature, from a person to whose
‘ family, fortune, and character I am so
‘ an entire stranger.’

Orsames. ‘ It will be easy for me,
‘ madam, to give you full satisfaction in
‘ all these particulars; but till I can do so
‘ I beg you will permit me, at least, to
‘ convince you of my passion.’

Lysetta. ‘ Tho’, sir, there is no room
‘ to doubt, either by your appearance or
‘ behaviour, but that you are a gentleman
‘ and a man of honour, yet I should be
‘ glad, methinks, to know some one
‘ person with whom you are acquaint-
‘ ed.’

Orsames. ‘ Unfortunately for me,
‘ madam, there is not one soul in this
‘ town

‘ town who can give any account of me :
‘ — this, perhaps, you will think some-
‘ what odd ; but permit me to give you
‘ a short sketch of my history, and you
‘ will cease to wonder at it.’

Lysetta. ‘ Then, pray sir, oblige me
‘ so far.’

Orsames. ‘ It is no boast in me, ma-
‘ dam, to assure your ladyship that my
‘ family is among the number of the
‘ most ancient in England, having been
‘ settled here long before the conquest,
‘ and many of them been bishops, judges,
‘ and privy counsellors ; but my father,
‘ taking some disgust at the measures in
‘ a late reign, resolved to quit his native
‘ country for ever ; and to that end sold
‘ the feat of his ancestors, with a very con-
‘ siderable estate in Somersetshire, and
‘ carried the purchase money, together
‘ with his whole family, to Philadelphia,
‘ where he had then a brother, reputed
‘ the most wealthy merchant in that
‘ place ; — it was there, madam, I was
‘ born, and am the only surviving issue of
‘ of my parents, and consequently the
‘ sole heir of their possessions, as also of
‘ my uncle’s, he dying without leaving
‘ any child behind him. — I fear I tire
‘ you, madam.’

Lysetta. ‘ No, fir, I beg you will go on.’

Orfames. ‘ From my very infancy
‘ there were somewhat in my nature
‘ which could not relish the manners of
‘ these Americans, though born among
‘ them ; — I had read a great deal, and
‘ heard much more concerning England,
‘ and had always a passionate desire to
‘ come to it ; but my father, even after
‘ my arriving at maturity, would never
‘ listen to any intreaties I made him on
‘ that score : — after his death, my ancle
‘ was no less averse to my removal ; but
‘ on his demise, finding myself freed from
‘ all dependency, and entirely master of
‘ my own actions, I left all my effects to
‘ be disposed of by a person whose integrity I am well assured of, and taking
‘ with me only a thousand guineas, just
‘ for present use, embarked in the first
‘ ship that sailed for England, where I
‘ happily arrived about six weeks since.’

Lysetta. ‘ But would it not have been
‘ better, fir, that you had staid at Philadelphia till your affairs had been settled ?’

‘ *Orfames.* ‘ Not at all, madam ; I
‘ have friends there that will manage for
‘ me

‘ me as well as if I were there in person ;
‘ — besides, an irresistible impulse hurried
‘ me to England ; — I could not then
‘ account for my impatience, but am
‘ now convinced it was my guardian
‘ angel called me to behold in reality
‘ that lovely face I have so often seen in
‘ dreams.’

Lysetta. ‘ What, dream of me !’

Orsames. ‘ Yes, madam, though so
‘ many leagues distant, my spirit has been
‘ often with you, — conversed with you,
‘ and avowed that flame my mortal part
‘ now feels.’

Lysetta. ‘ Is it possible !’

Orsames, ‘ True, by Heaven !’

Lysetta. ‘ And are you certain I am
‘ the same you saw in your sleep ?’

Orsames. ‘ I could not be deceived ;
‘ — the first moment my eyes were
‘ blest with your divine presence at the
‘ Chapel Royal, I forgot the solemnity of
‘ the place, and the pious business that
‘ had brought me thither ; and as the
‘ Poet says,’

When I attempted to say my prayers,
Began my prayers to Heaven,
And ended them to you.

Lysetta. ‘ ’Tis very wonderful; — but
‘ ’tis time enough to talk of these things.
‘ — As you have related to me the
‘ former part of your life, I should like
‘ to know in what manner you intend to
‘ regulate the future.’

Orsames. ‘ That must be submitted
‘ to my charming directress; — all my
‘ affairs, as well as my heart, must
‘ henceforth be at your disposal: — I
‘ had thoughts, indeed, of purchasing a
‘ small estate, of about fifteen hundred
‘ or two thousand pounds a year; — but
‘ whether I should put the remainder of
‘ my fortune into the public funds, or lay
‘ it out on an employment at Court, I had
‘ not yet determined.’

Lysetta. ‘ Oh, by all means buy a place
‘ at Court; — the Court is the only
‘ Heaven upon Earth.’

Orsames. ‘ Next to your company I
‘ believe it is; and since you approve
‘ the thought, shall infallibly pursue it.’

Lysetta.

Lysetta. ‘Whoever you marry, sir, will doubtless be of my opinion.’

Orsames. ‘Ah! do not wrong my faithful heart so much as to imagine it capable of being charmed by any other fair! — No, — if all my love, my services, my prayers, should fail to move the adorable Lysetta, I vow an eternal celibacy.’

Lysetta. ‘You men always talk thus when you would impose on the credulity of our sex; — but, sir, it is time alone that is the true touch-stone of sincerity.’

Orsames. ‘Madam, it is, and to that, employ’d in my assiduities, and your own goodness, I shall trust the decision of my fate; — therefore, I once more implore your permission to repeat my vows, and pay you the tribute which beauty like yours demands from love like mine.’

Lysetta. ‘I will not hear so much of love; — but as you are a stranger in town, and as yet have no acquaintance, I cannot be uncharitable enough to re-

‘fuse you the privilege of visiting me
‘sometimes.’

Orsames. ‘Heavenly creature ! but it
‘is in this humble posture I ought to
‘thank your goodness.’

With these Words he threw himself upon his knees, and catching hold of both her hands, pressed first the one and then the other to his lips with the greatest appearance of transport ; — all which she suffered, nor discovered the least reluctance ; — I know not how long he might have continued in this mute courtship, if the sound of somebody at the door had not obliged him suddenly to rise.

It was Lysetta’s servant, who immediately entered and presented her with two letters, which had been just left her by the post ; — she looked on the superscriptions, then threw them carelessly on the table, without shewing any impatience to examine the contents ; but her lover, either thro’ politeness, or because he had acted enough of his part for the first time, thought proper to take his leave, saying he would do himself the honour to wait on her the next day.

He

He was no sooner gone, than she began to give a loose to those agitations which his presence and discourse had occasioned in her mind, and which she had not without great difficulty restrained from being visible.

It was in these terms she expressed herself, which, incoherent as they are, I shall deliver them to my readers, just as I found them the next morning engraved on my Tablets.

Lysetta. ‘ Well, this is the oddest accident; sure there was never any thing so astonishing! — let people say what they will, — there is a great deal in the throwing of a cup; — that woman is certainly the devil; — how exactly she describ’d this gentleman. — I have said I would never marry, but if the stars have ordain’d it otherwise, it is in vain for weak woman to resist; and if his fortune be such as he pretends it is, I can see no cause for any one to blame me.’

Here she stopp’d, and fell into a little resverie; but soon coming out of it, thus renew’d her ejaculations:

Lysetta. - 'There is nothing in the person nor address of this new lover, but what is perfectly agreeable, — and I believe I shall like him well enough on a little more acquaintance with him; — he seems vastly charm'd with me; but one ought not to build on what the men say on these occasions. — There is something strangely particular, indeed, in his dreaming of me without ever having seen me: — in fine, the more I consider, the more I find the hand of fate is in this business, and I must submit.'

After this she seem'd somewhat more composed, and began to read the letters she had received; — I also look'd over them at the same time; but found they were only from relations, of family affairs of no moment to the public, or to the narrative I am reciting.

When I came home, had thrown myself into my easy-chair, and began to ruminate on the extraordinary scene I had been witness of, I knew not whether the base design, which I now plainly perceived had been concerted between the Fortune-teller and Orsames, or the weakness and infatuation of Lysetta in giving credit

credit to their romantie lies, had the most right to engross my amazement.

But when I reflected more deeply on the various impositions I daily saw practised in the world, my wonder ceased, on account either of the Fortune-teller or the Fortune-hunter, and fix'd itself entirely on the simplicity of Lysetta. — It now seem'd not strange to me, that the most illiterate and abject wretches should be endow'd with a natural store of cunning, which, back'd by impudence, renders them capable of forming contrivances to deceive; else how do we so often see common pickpockets and house-breakers circumvent the watchfulness of the most cautious? but then those sort of pilferers rob us when our heads are turn'd another way, or when we are sleeping in our beds; but in listening to Fortune tellers we are defrauded with our eyes broad open, and give, as it were, our own consent to the worst kind of theft, that of stealing away our understanding.

People guilty of this egregious folly, when detected in it, pretend they consult those ridiculous oracles for no other end than merely to divert themselves, without believing, or even remembering afterwards one syllable of the predictions deli-

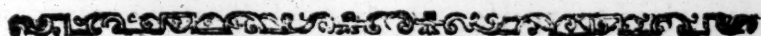
vered to them. — This may, perhaps, at first be true; but there are too many instances which prove that custom, by degrees, turns into earnest what might once be meant but as a jest. — The reason is this :

Those subtle creatures frequently find means, either by emissaries they employ for that purpose, or by insinuating themselves among the servants, to get into the secrets of families, and one real fact, serving to make all they say believed, gives them the power to work the person who depends upon them almost to any point they aim at.

The most pernicious designs have been carry'd on this way. — Husbands have been set against their wives, and wives against their husbands; — parents have been made to disregard their children, and children to forget all obedience to their parents; — the best matches have been broke off, and the most disproportionate ones made : — in fine, there is no kind of mischief but what has happen'd when a Fortune-teller has been bribed by some base person, who has an interest in bringing about such events.

There-

Therefore, as I think there is a law in force against these pretended dealers in futurity, I cannot help saying, that I regret its not being executed with greater punctuality ; since the more simple an evil appears, the more dangerous it proves in its effects.



C H A P. IV.

Contains the catastrophe of an affair, which the repetition of ought not to give offence to any one, except the person whose resentment the author will not look upon as a misfortune.

LYSETTA was so strongly persuaded in her mind, that it was her fate to marry Orfames, that she made not the least attempt to check the growing inclination she had for him, but rather thought it a virtue in her to encourage the most tender sentiments for a person ordain'd by Heaven to be her husband.

I made several visits to her, both in my Visible and Invisible capacity, and seldom went without finding Orfames there, and every time more free and degagee than before.

before.—He made so swift a progress in his courtship, that in less than a fortnight he became the Major-Domo of her family, — commanded all the servants, and behaved as if already their master, as indeed he was in every thing except the name.

To add to all this, Lysetta suffered him to conduct her to all public places ; — they took the air together in the Mall, Kensington-Gardens, and Hyde-Park, and sat in the same box at the Play-house ; he always dined and supped with her, whatever other company were there : — in a word, they were never asunder but in those hours when decency obliged them to be so.

So strange a revolution in the behaviour of Lysetta made a great deal of noise in town ; all her acquaintance were surprized ; — all her friends and kindred were very much alarmed at it ; especially as the person to whom she shewed these extraordinary favours was altogether unknown in the world, nor could they get the least account of him.

Those, who either through a long conversation or affinity of blood, could take the privilege of discoursing with her on
this

this head, did it in a very free manner ; but the answers she gave to their interrogatories were far from being satisfactory to them : — when she told them his history as he had related it to her, they treated it with contempt ; — some said, — that he was an impostor ; — others more modest, that they wished he was not so ; — to both which she returned, — that whatever he were, she was certain it was her fate to marry him, and therefore desired that they would give themselves no farther pain on that occasion.

As she was naturally of a haughty, obstinate disposition, it is highly probable that the remonstrances they took the liberty of making to her, rather strengthened than abated her resolution of giving herself to him : — I was at her house one day, under cover of my Invisible Belt, when I heard the following conversation between them :

Orsames. ‘ Condemn me not, my angel,
‘ for being sometimes melancholy even
‘ in your divine presence ; — though you
‘ have promised to make me one day the
‘ happiest of mankind, and I look upon
‘ every word of that dear mouth as un-
‘ fail-
‘ ing as an Oracle, yet when I consider the
‘ length of time between me and the
‘ consummation of my wishes, the im-
‘ patience

‘patience of my passion will not permit
‘me to be gay.’

Lysetta. ‘You men are always in
‘such a hurry in every thing you
‘do.’

Orsames. ‘Ah, madam, ’tis a dread-
‘ful thing to have one’s happiness depend
‘on the uncertain winds and waves, it
‘may be yet two months before my
‘effects can arrive from Philadelphia.’

Lysetta. ‘And do you call that so
‘long a time?’

Orsames. ‘A million of ages in the
‘account of love; and even, according to
‘common calculation, longer than human
‘nature can sustain continual torments;
‘— eight whole weeks, six and fifty
‘anxious days, and as many restless
‘— nights; upwards of thirteen hundred
‘hours of tedious expectation; and
‘minutes almost numberless, wasted in
‘pain which might be passed in plea-
‘sure, if you would shorten the tremen-
‘dous date.’

Lysetta. ‘What would you have me
‘do?’

Orsames.

Orfames. ‘ Ah ! if you loved, you
‘ would not need to be told ; but of your-
‘ self generously bring the blessed event
‘ nearer to my wishes.’

Lysetta. ‘ You would not have me
‘ marry you till your affairs are settled,
‘ and things can be done regularly for
‘ our mutual satisfaction.’

Orfames. ‘ I understand you, madam ;
‘ — the articles of jointure and pin-
‘ money, I know, are customary in modish
‘ marriages ; but the passion you have
‘ inspired me with is of too sublime a
‘ nature to stoop to such mean forms. —
‘ I ask not what your fortune is, but will
‘ settle the whole of mine upon you ; —
‘ your lovely person is all the treasure I
‘ am ambitious of preserving ; — the rest
‘ shall be at your disposal.’

Lysetta. ‘ That is kind, indeed ; but
‘ more than I desire or would accept
‘ of.’

Orfames. ‘ Oh ! that you had no other
‘ fortune than your beauty ; — then would
‘ the sincerity of my love be proved by
‘ endowing you with all that Heaven has
‘ made me master of. — Alas ! you know
‘ not

‘not how ardently, — how faithfully I
‘adore you.’

Lysetta. ‘Yes, I am vain enough to
‘think I have some share in your affections.’

Orsames. ‘Some share! — oh! could
‘you be sensible of the thousandth part
‘of what I feel, pity, if not love, would
‘compel you to ease my throbbing heart
‘of the suspense it labours under, and you
‘would give yourself to my despairing
‘— dying — burning — bleeding pas-
‘sion.’

Lysetta. ‘I have already said I will
‘be yours, and now again repeat it.’

Orsames. ‘But when, my Angel!’

In speaking these words he threw himself upon his knees before her, — burst into a flood of well dissimulated tears, and grasp’d her Robe de Chambre with agonies which I cannot but say had much the appearance of reality, while in these terms he prosecuted his design:

Orsames. ‘I have till now supported
‘life but in the rapturous hope of being
‘one day bless’d in your possession: but
‘even hope, by its uncertainty, becomes at
‘last

I ‘ last too weak an aid ; and soon, very
‘ soon, my adorable Lysetta, will you be-
‘ hold your faithful lover a cold breathless
‘ corps, unless the balm of your kindness
‘ recruits the vital lamp, and gives fresh
‘ vigour to my depress’d and breaking
‘ heart.’

Lysetta. ‘ I cannot bear to hear and
‘ and see you thus ; — rise, sir, — this
‘ posture does not become the man whom
‘ I intend to make my husband.’

Orsames. ‘ No, by Heaven, I will never
‘ quit your feet without an assurance of
‘ my happiness, — Say then, — oh ! say !
‘ when shall be the blissful day that makes
‘ you mine !’

Lysetta. ‘ Since it must be so, —
‘ even when you please. — No, hold, —
‘ I had forgot myself.’

Orsames. ‘ Oh, Heavens, what now !’

Lysetta. ‘ I promised a reverend
‘ clergyman, my near kinsman, that if
‘ ever I married he should perform the
‘ ceremony ; — he is at present out of
‘ town, but will return next Sunday, and
‘ on the Tuesday following it shall not be
‘ my

‘ my fault if we do not attend him at the
‘ Altar.’

Orfames. ‘ Extatic found ! — may I
‘ depend on the performance of this
‘ Heavenly promise !’

Lysetta. ‘ You may, and be entirely
‘ easy on that point ; take now my hand,
‘ as an earnest of my giving it to you in a
‘ more solemn manner before a parson ;
‘ — henceforward I shall look upon my-
‘ self as yours.’

Orfames. ‘ Angel ! — Goddess ! —
‘ thus then let me seal the covenant on
‘ those charming lips that has pronounced
‘ it.’

Lysetta. ‘ The covenant will not hold
‘ good in law without both parties in-
‘ terchangeably sign their assent.’

She uttered these words with a most pleasing smile, and at the same time threw her arms about his neck, and returned the passionate salute she had received from him, adding this tender expression :

Lysetta. ‘ My dear, dear Orfames, I
‘ do not now blush to confess to you, that
‘ from the first moment you declared your-
‘ self

‘ self my lover, my heart corresponded
‘ with your vows, and told me what would
‘ be the event.’

He affected too much transport, on hearing her speak in this manner, to be able to make any other reply than kisses and embraces, which, as she was far from repelling, or seeming the least offended at, I know not what advantages he might have taken, on finding her thus soften’d by his artifices, if a sudden interruption had not, happily for her, broke off this dangerous entertainment.

A footman came in, and told her that her aunt, lady Gravelove, was come to visit her; on which she cry’d with some peevishness,

Lysetta. ‘ Pish, — Why did you not
‘ say I was from home?’

Footman. ‘ Your ladyship gave me no
‘ such orders; but if you please, I will go
‘ and tell her that I was mistaken, and
‘ that your ladyship went out without my
‘ knowing you had done so.’

Lysetta. ‘ No, no, I must see her;
‘ — go and say I will wait on her pre-
‘ sently.’

Then

Then turning fondly to Orfames, said,

Lysetta. ‘ Do you chuse to join company with my aunt ; or shall I fetch some book to amuse you with till she is gone

Orfames. ‘ No, my dearest love ; — this lady has always look’d upon me with an unpleasing eye, especially of late, therefore will not offend her with my presence ; — neither are my spirits enough composed, in the excess of joy you have inspired me with, to read any thing with attention ; — so will take a little walk.’

Lysetta. ‘ Do so ; — but I shall expect you back to supper, — my aunt seldom stays longer than to drink tea, and I am sure I shall not press her at this time.’

No more was said on either side ; — they embraced and parted, — she went into the next room, and he down stairs, in order to go where his business or inclination called him.

As I never believed this fellow was what he pretended, I had taken some pains

pains to discover the truth of his circumstances ; but without any success, till it now came into my mind to follow him after he had left Lysetta's house ; which I did, resolving not to lose sight of him till he should return to her again.

He went directly to Drury-lane, walk'd very fast, and never stopp'd till he came to the entrance of a narrow passage between that place and Wild-street, where he stood still, and look'd round him, as I suppose, to see if any one was near who might know him ; for day was not yet quite shut in ; — then pass'd a little farther, — look'd about him again, and finding the coast, as he thought, clear, none being in the alley but his Invisible attendant, slipp'd hastily into a little dirty ale-house, where an old woman met him, and told him his friends were all above, on which he ran up stairs and push'd open the door of a room, pretty spacious, indeed, but had otherwise all the signs of beggary and wretchedness about it.

Here we found five or six men, tolerably well habited ; but had something in their countenances which made me guess their occupation before they discover'd it by their conversation ; for they were no better than a gang of thieves and sharpers,
— they

— they were sitting round a table, with a great bowl of punch before them, when Orfames rush'd in, and with a gay air accosted them in these terms :

Orfames. ‘ With me joy, my lads,—
‘ my hearts of steel, — with me joy ; —
‘ I have gain'd my point ; — all is over,
‘ i'faith.’

First Man. ‘ What, married !’

Orfames. ‘ No, but as good as married ;—the wench and her twelve thousand pounds are as sure to me, as if I had the one in my arms and the other in my pocket ; — Tuesday is the day, my buffs.’

As he spoke this he drumm'd with his hands upon the table, and roar'd with a shrill voice this scrap of an old ballad :

Orfames. ‘ On Tuesday morning 'twill
‘ be all my care,
‘ To powder my locks and to comb
‘ up my hair :
‘ Hey, so trim and so smug upon
‘ Tuesday.

‘ But I must have more money ; by G—d,
‘ I have not a single doit left.’

Second

Second Man. ‘How! — All the fifty
‘ pieces gone already?’

Orsames. ‘Ay, faith, and well laid
‘ out too; — I shall return it with inter-
‘ est;—you shall all share in the money,
‘ and the woman too. — But come, —
‘ how stands stock among you?’

Third Man. ‘Curfed low: — tho’
‘ we have been all out to day we have
‘ not collected above thirty pieces, and
‘ four gold watches that must be knock’d
‘ to pieces, and the cases melted down,
‘ or the makers names may betray us.’

Fourth Man. ‘The road grows worse
‘ and worse every day, I think;—people
‘ are either poorer or more cautious than
‘ ever they were.’

Orsames. ‘But did you get nothing
‘ from the four ladies that the Fortune-
‘ teller told you were to take the air this
‘ morning on Barnes-Common?’

Fifth Man. ‘I should have done;
‘ but as the devil would have it, just as
‘ they were going to pull out their purses,
‘ three gentlemen, with fire-arms, came
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‘ galloping towards us, and oblig’d me
‘ to make off without my booty.’

Orfames. ‘ ’Twas damn’d unlucky.’

First Man. ‘ One meets with a thou-
‘ sand such disappointments ; — for my
‘ part I am half sick of the business, and
‘ so I believe we are all.’

Second Man. ‘ Ay, faith ; for what
‘ with seeing innkeepers, coachmen, for-
‘ tune-tellers, and other such necessary
‘ informers, we have the least part of the
‘ profit to ourselves.’

Third Man. Ay, — I wish, Orfames,
‘ you were once married, that you might
‘ set up a gaming-table under the sanc-
‘ tion of your lady’s name ; — gaming
‘ is ten times a more profitable, as well as
‘ a safer way of thieving.’

Orfames. ‘ You know it was my bar-
‘ gain, and you may depend upon my
‘ honour that it shall be the first thing I
‘ will do.’

Fourth Man. It will be a joyful day ;
‘ for since taxes have been so high, and
‘ trade so low, such numbers of shop-
‘ keepers are obliged to take the road,
‘ that

‘ that we old practitioners can scarce get
‘ a living by it.

Orsames. ‘ Well, well, all this will
‘ be over in a short time ; — but you
‘ must raise me some cash ; — I can
‘ easily give you an account of the fifty
‘ pieces.’

Fifth Man. ‘ No, no, it needs not ;
‘ — we know you would not sink upon
‘ us.’

Orsames. ‘ I chuse, however, to do
‘ it : — the first article is five guineas to
‘ the Fortune-teller, as an earnest of the
‘ hundred she is to receive after my mar-
‘ riage with Lysetta : — the second is
‘ twenty pounds for a gold snuff-box,
‘ which I pretended to have brought
‘ from Philadelphia and presented to her
‘ ladyship : — the third is about ten more,
‘ spent in three several jaunts I made
‘ with her to Richmond, Windsor, and
‘ Greenwich : — the remainder, you
‘ may believe, might well be spent in do-
‘ nations to her servants, board-wages
‘ to my own man, — paying my lodg-
‘ ings at two guineas a week, chair-hire,
‘ and other such necessary expences.’

First Man. ‘ You could do no less.’

Second Man. ‘ Ay, ay, — nothing of
‘ all this could have been spared. — But
‘ what sum do you demand at present?’

Orfames. ‘ I believe twenty pieces
‘ will defray the whole charges of the
‘ wedding, which is all I want; — after
‘ them, my boys, I shall have enough
‘ for you all.’

On this every one turn’d out his pockets, and the sum requested was immediately made up and laid upon the table, which Orfames put into his purse; and then some discourse ensued among this vicious company which I chuse to pass over in silence, as it would be no fit entertainment for the chaste ears of my fair readers.

Orfames staid with them about two hours, and then took his leave in order to sup with Lysetta, as she had desir’d he would; — I accompanied him not thither, but went home to my own apartment, more full of confusion at the discovery I had made than I am able to express.

Tho’

Tho' I half despised Lysetta for the follies I had seen her guilty of, yet when I reflected on her birth, and the character she had hitherto maintain'd in the world, I could not bear the thoughts of her becoming the victim of the base design concerted against her; and her fortune, reputation, and eternal peace of mind, the prey of such a nest of villains.

My whole study was now fully bent how to snatch this unfortunate lady from that gulph of perdition she was upon the brink of, and so near plunging into.

I was extremely divided in my thoughts what to do on this occasion; to give her any hints concerning the dangers to which she exposed herself and reputation, by encouraging the addresses of a man whose character she was so little acquainted with, I knew would be in vain, as she had rejected all the warnings given her on that score, and refused to listen to the admonitions of her best friends and nearest kindred. — I had it in my power, indeed, to inform her of much more than any of them could even guess at; but then I could not relate the scene I had been witness of without discovering at the same time the secret of my Invisible Belt,

which was by no means proper for me to entrust her with.

To acquaint her by letter with what I knew concerning Orsames, and the villanous conspiracy had been form'd to ruin her, I fear'd would be to as little purpose ; and doubted not but she would look upon an anonymous intimation only as a piece of malice, and treat it with the contempt it might seem to merit ; — as this, however, was the only method which I could take to save her, with any convenience to myself, I resolved to pursue it ; and accordingly wrote to her the next morning a full account of all I had been witness of between Orsames and his wicked companions.

I made this letter be left at her house before the time in which she usually got out of bed, to the end she might have leisure to consider the contents, without being interrupted by any company coming in ; — as I was desirous of seeing in what manner she would receive this intelligence, I went, under cover of my Belt, and gained entrance just as she had finish'd the perusal.

Her

Her behaviour was such as I had apprehended it would be; — she tore the letter, — storm'd, and cry'd out,

Lysetta. ‘ Was there ever so much
‘ impudence! — Sure the person that
‘ sent this infamous scrawl must have a
‘ very mean opinion of my understand-
‘ ing to think I could give the least credit
‘ to such a vile aspersion. — Orfames an
‘ impostor! a companion for thieves and
‘ vagabonds! — ridiculous.’

And then again :

Lysetta. ‘ This must certainly be a
‘ contrivance of some of my wise kindred
‘ to break off the match : — I could find
‘ in my heart to send for Orfames and
‘ marry him this instant, to shew how
‘ much I despise their little malice : —
‘ but tis no matter, — Tuesday will soon
‘ arrive, and that will put an end to all.’

I staid a full hour, in the supposition that Orfames would make her a morning's visit; but finding, by some discourse she had with her maid, that she did not expect him, and was making herself ready to go among the shops for things she wanted to buy, I quitted her apartment

much disconcerted at the ill success of what I had done.

However, as I had little else to employ my time that day, I went again in the afternoon, Orfames was now there, and two ladies of Lysetta's particular acquaintance : — whether she had mention'd any thing to him of the letter I cannot be certain ; but am apt to think she had not ; for he appear'd with an alertness, which, by all I could discover, had nothing of constraint in it.

Cards were call'd for, and they were just going to sit down to Whist, when word was brought Lysetta that her cousin, Capt. Platoon, was just arriv'd from Carlisle and come to wait upon her, on which she order'd him to be shew'd up immediately.

Orfames, who I perceived had turn'd pale as ashes on hearing this gentleman's name, now rose hastily from his chair, and said to Lysetta,

Orfames. ‘ I have just thought of some business I had to dispatch ; — your ladyship must excuse me.’

Lysetta.

Lysetta. ‘ You will not go ?’

Orfames. ‘ The affair that calls me is
‘ of consequence ; — I cannot stay.’

She was going to make some reply, but the Captain came that instant into the room ; — while he was paying his compliments to his cousin and the other ladies, Orfames had taken up his hat and was endeavouring to slip out unperceived ; but the quick-sightedness of Lysetta prevented him ; — she ran to him, and catching hold of his sleeve spoke thus :

Lysetta. ‘ You shall not go, at least
‘ till I have presented you to my cousin.’

Then turning to the Captain said,

Lysetta. ‘ This is a gentleman, cousin,
‘ whose acquaintance, I believe, you will
‘ hereafter think yourself happy in.’

On this the Captain advanced with great politeness to embrace the person his fair kinswoman presented to him ; but had no sooner fix’d his eyes upon his face, than he started back with the utmost astonishment, and cry’d out to Lysetta :

Capt. Platoon. ‘What is the meaning
‘ of this, madam? — Who would you
‘ introduce to me?’

She was opening her mouth to make
some answer; but Orfames, who was
drawing as fast as he could towards the
door, hinder’d her from speaking, by
saying, with a hesitating voice:

Orfames. ‘Madam, — the gentleman
‘ does not seem to desire any new ac-
‘ quaintance; — I will wait on your lady-
‘ ship another time.’

In speaking this he got to the top of
the stair-case, and ’tis likely would have
made but one step to the bottom, if the
— Captain had not prevented him, by run-
ning to him and catching fast hold of
him by the collar, dragg’d him back,
saying at the same time;

Capt. Platoon. ‘No, rascal, you must
‘ not think to leave this place till you
‘ have confess’d what devil gave you the
‘ impudence to introduce yourself into
‘ such company, — and on what villain-
‘ ous design you are thus disguised in
‘ the habit of a gentleman.’

Orfames.

Orfames. ‘ Sir, I don’t understand this
‘ usage; — you neither know me nor did
‘ I ever see you before : — you must mis-
‘ take me for some other.’

Capt. Platoon. ‘ Dog, — do you think
‘ I am to be deceived by the dress I see
‘ you in?’

Then addressing himself to Lysetta,
who stood as motionless as if transfix’d
with thunder, went on thus :

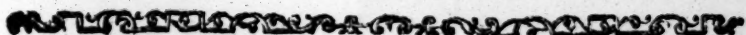
Capt. Platoon. ‘ Madam, by what
‘ means soever this villain has imposed
‘ upon you, I do assure you, upon my
‘ honour, that two months ago he was a
‘ private man in Capt. Cutcomb’s com-
‘ pany, and drum’d out of the regiment
‘ for pig-stealing, and other misdemea-
‘ nors; for some of which, indeed, he
‘ ought to have been hang’d.’

On these words Lysetta scream’d out,
— ‘ Oh! Heavens!’ — and fell into a
swoon; — the Captain seeing this, quitted
his prisoner to run with the two ladies to
her assistance; and Orfames took this op-
portunity of making his escape,

Proper means being apply'd, she soon recovered, and the swelling passions which had occasioned this disorder vented themselves in tears; — the Captain appear'd a little impatient to know how she became acquainted with such a wretch as Orfames; but she told him she was not then in a condition to inform him of the particulars. — said, she was very ill and must lie down, and desired to see him another time; — on which he took his leave, as did the two ladies, who knowing Orfames had profess'd himself her lover, and the encouragement she had given him, I could perceive smiled within themselves at the discovery.

Thus was Lysetta preserved from ruin, and had no other punishment for her folly than being laugh'd at by those who were privy to the affair: — as for Orfames, I have since met him about town in a very shabby and tatter'd condition; — the gang of villains, his associates, I believe are dispersed, and one of them has made his exit at Tyburn.





C H A P. V.

Treats on various matters, some of which, the author dares venture to assure the public, will hereafter be found not only more entertaining, but also of more consequence than at present they appear to be.

I HAD been told that lady Playfeild's route was an assemblage of the most brilliant and polite persons of both sexes, and tho' I never had any great opinion of these sort of meetings, yet I was tempted to go thither, in order to be myself a witness how far the description that had been given me was consonant to truth. —As I am an entire stranger to her ladyship, and did not care for the formality of being introduced by any one who went there, I choose to make this visit in my Invisible Capacity.

The great number of wax-tapers, the sparkle of the ladies jewels, and the extraordinary beauty of some among them, was dazzling to my eyes at first entrance ; but I soon-found that I had the same fault to find

find with this as I had done in all other mix'd company I ever saw ; — a kind of hurry and confusion, which destroys that solid conversation that is so agreeable when only a few select friends are met together.

It was very near nine o'clock when I went thither, yet there were several who came in after me ; — lady Playfeild received all of them with her accustomed politeness ; but for a great while there was nothing in the salutations on either side which engross'd my attention so far as to make me spread my Tablets to retain it.'

I was, indeed, quite indolent to every thing that was said, till the entrance of lady Allmode gave a little spur to my curiosity ; — I had heard much talk of this lady, not only for her being extravagantly fond of every new fashion, but also for a certain peculiarity in her manner of conversation, which made her admired by people of a low education, and as much laugh'd at by those of a superior.

I had been told that she had an utter aversion to plain English ; — and so thorough a contempt for what she called the vulgar way of speaking, that when she
talk'd,

talk'd, even on the most common things, she interlarded all she said with the hardest words she could pick out of the Dictionary, and frequently coined new ones of her own, which never were nor scarce ever will be found in any Vocabulary.

Lady Playfeild, I perceived, received her with a great deal of respect; — I was then at some distance, but on finding they were entering into conversation, drew more near, to have an opportunity of hearing and improving myself, by a person of whom so extraordinary a description had been given me.

After the first compliments were over, lady Playfeild addressed herself to her in these terms :

Lady Playfeild, ‘ Tho’ I am always
‘ happy when I see your ladyship, yet
‘ now I can scarce forbear complaining
‘ of your unkindness in coming without
‘ miss Arabella ; — I hear she has been
‘ in town above a week.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ I could not have
‘ been guilty of so enormous a solecism
‘ in good breeding, as not to have
‘ brought her to pay her duty to your
lady-

‘ ladyship, if there had been a possibility
‘ in nature to have done it.’

Lady Playfeild. ‘ I hope miss is well,
‘ madam,’

Lady Al'mode. ‘ Perfectly so, madam,
‘ as to her health; but such a sight, —
‘ such a figure; — a greater metamor-
‘ phosis than any in Ovid.’

Lady Playfeild. ‘ What does your
‘ ladyship mean?’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Oh, madam, the re-
‘ moteft corners of the moft defart of
‘ the three Arabias never produced such a
‘ creature, — such a Tramontane, as the
‘ Italians elegantly phrase it. — Well, —
‘ these people, who live a great way from
‘ London, are such absurdians, — such
‘ awkwardities. — Would your ladyship
‘ believe it, — they sent the girl home in
‘ a cap that quite covered the drum of her
‘ ears?’

Lady Playfeild. ‘ That might be to
‘ prevent her from catching cold in the
‘ stage-coach.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Oh, Jupiter! — how
‘ am I surpriz'd to hear your ladyship talk
‘ in

‘ in this manner ! — as if any one could
‘ catch cold with what is the fashion. —
‘ But this is not all, — the girl had several
‘ new suits of cloaths when she left
‘ London, made in the genteelest taste ;
‘ but my country aunt took it into her
‘ head, that either I had allow’d too
‘ scanty a pattern, or that she had out-
‘ grown them, out of mere goodwill and
‘ simplicity, has lengthen’d all her petti-
‘ coats to such a ridiculous size, that they
‘ almost come down to the buckles of
‘ her shoes ; — I protest one can scarce
‘ see whether she has any ankles, much
‘ less if she has any calves to her
‘ legs.’

On this a gentleman who stood pretty near approach’d lady Allmode, and with a tone the most ironical that could be, replied to what she had said in these words :

Gent’eman. ‘ Your ladyship must excuse the mistake your aunt has made ;
‘ for I fancy the fashion of going half
‘ naked may not yet have reach’d so far
‘ as Wales.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ You certainly speak
‘ the rationalii of the thing, sir ; — few
‘ of these mountaineers regard any thing
‘ but

‘ but loading their tables with provisions,
 ‘ feasting their tenants, paying their
 ‘ debts, standing up for the liberties of
 ‘ their country, and such-like antiquated
 ‘ obsolete customs ; — for my part, all
 ‘ my faculties are immerg’d in a pro-
 ‘ foundity of astonishment, to think that
 ‘ my aunt could marry and settle among
 ‘ such aliens to politeness, — such hea-
 ‘ thens to the laws of good-breeding and
 ‘ the Drawing-Room.’

Gentleman. ‘ Perhaps, madam, the cus-
 ‘ toms and manners you mention were
 ‘ in vogue at the time of your aunt’s mar-
 ‘ riage ?’

Lady Allmode. ‘ I protest, sir, you
 ‘ have hit upon the solution of this enig-
 ‘ ma ; — it was, indeed, in the reign of
 ‘ queen Ann that she married.’

I had seen enough of this fine lady,
 and did not chuse to have my Tablets
 crowded with any more of her unintelli-
 gible jargon, so retired to another part of
 the room, where I saw three ladies got
 together, and seemed very earnest in dis-
 course.’

But little was I like to be the better for
 my near approach, for being on the topic
 ‘ of

of scandal, each was so full, and so highly delighted with the thoughts of it, that all speaking at the same time prevented me from hearing distinctly what was said by any of them ; and all I could gather at last was, that a certain lady of their acquaintance had been caught with her footman ; and that her husband contented himself with securing his future honour by an Italian safe-guard.'

As I had been informed of the particulars of this story before, the foible of the transgressing fair did not so much engross my meditations as the pleasure those of her own sex seemed to take in exposing it, and I could not help saying to myself with the Poet :

- ' There is a lust in man no charm can
 ' tame,
- ' Of loudly publishing his neighbour's
 ' shame.
- ' On Eagles wings immortal scandals
 ' fly,
- ' While virtuous actions are but born,
 and die.

But this was a place more proper to collect matter for reflection hereafter, than to indulge it at present ; so I pass'd on among the gaming-tables, which were
eleven

eleven in number, and none of them un-occupy'd.

Here it was pleasant enough to observe the various attitudes of those that play'd; and I think there is not a more sure way of judging people's dispositions than to see them at this diversion; — some of those who swept the stakes received the favours fortune bestow'd on them with an ease and calmness, which shewed that they had not been over anxious whether she smiled or frowned; but there were many more, who snatch'd up the glittering metal with a greediness which sufficiently demonstrated that avarice was the chief excitement to what they did.

As for the losers, it gave me an infinite satisfaction to see the unconcerned behaviour of some few among them; — while others again filled me with a no less sensible disquiet at their impatience: — I was ashamed to find a gentleman of rank and fortune forget all politeness, and sometimes even common decency, to those who had his money in their pockets; and sorry in my heart to see a lady bite her lips, wrinkle her forehead with unbecoming frowns, distort every feature, and disfigure all the charms that nature had bestow'd on her, for the loss of what was
not

not worth half that anxiety to preserve. —

‘ Good Heaven ! said I to myself, if this
‘ be the effects of gaming, what madness
‘ is it to venture one’s peace in that un-
‘ certain gulph ?’

I remember a saying of old Massenger’s, which may be applicable enough on this occasion :

‘ The wise will never put in fortune’s
‘ power,
‘ That which they cannot lose without re-
‘ pining.’

The beautiful Ismena was this night among the number of the unfortunates, but not of the impatient ; — I stood behind her chair, and saw her empty a well fill’d purse, and take out of it even the last guinea with a smile ; — she was, indeed, a young lady lately come to the possession of a very large fortune, and could not want what she had thrown away ; but the same might also be said of Clarinda, who play’d at the same table with her, and had also lost a considerable sum to sir Charles Fairlove, with whom these two ladies had been engaged this whole evening at a Poole at Picquet : — but see the difference, the latter of them rose from the table in a fury, — tore her fan, and cry’d,

Clara

Clarinda. ‘Curse the cards, — I will
‘play no more this night, — that I am
‘resolved ;— at least not with sir Charles.’

Ismena. ‘Nay, madam, we have no
‘reason to be angry with sir Charles, for
‘having done by us what we would
‘gladly have done by him ; — for my
‘part, tho’ he has stripp’d me of all I had
‘about me, I am as good friends with
‘him as ever.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘I hope so, ma-
‘dam, otherwise the good-luck I have
‘had at play would prove the greatest
‘misfortune of my life.’

Clarinda. ‘The devil’s in the cards
‘to-night, I think ; — I never lost at
‘Picquet in my life before, — and now I
‘have thrown away, — I cannot justly
‘say how much, — but I’ll see.’

She then turned to the table, and pour’d
out of a purse what was remaining in it,
and having counted the sum went on in the
same heat as before.

Clarinda. ‘Yes, — by Heaven I
‘thought so ! — no less than six and twenty
‘pieces.’

Sir

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ I should be
‘ sorry, madam, to give you any disquiet
‘ on the score of such a trifle ; but I can
‘ do no more than offer you a chance for
‘ regaining all you have lost ; — if you
‘ please, I will stake the whole against five
‘ of yours.’

Clarinda. ‘ I should lose that too, I
‘ suppose.’

Ismena. ‘ Venture it, however ; —
‘ if you lose it I’ll be your halves,
‘ and send you the money to-morrow
‘ morning.’

Clarinda. ‘ Well then I will make
‘ one more essay.’

With these words she sat down again ;
— they play’d ; she was the winner, and
‘ now appear’d as gay and happy as she
‘ had lately been discontented ; — sir
‘ Charles smiled with some disdain at this
‘ reverse in her humour, and turning to
‘ Ismena, said,

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Now, madam,
‘ you must take up the winner.’

Ismena.

Ismena. ‘ She must give me credit
‘ then, sir; you both know I have no stake
‘ to lay down.’

Clarinda. ‘ You must excuse me for
‘ that, madam, — it may turn my luck ;
‘ — besides, one has no heart to play when
‘ one does not see the money on the
‘ table.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Well then,
‘ beautiful Ismena, — I will give you
‘ credit; — or if you please, will play
‘ upon the square, — my honour against
‘ yours.’

Ismena. ‘ With all my heart, sir
‘ Charles.’

The ill-nature, the ill-manners, and, indeed, the ingratitude of Clarinda, in refusing to give the credit of a stake at cards, to a friend who had just before offer’d to pay half the losses she should sustain in playing with another, made that young lady as disagreeable in my eyes, as the sweetness of disposition and generosity of the sprightly Ismena made her charming to a much greater degree than ever she had appear’d to me before, — all lovely,
ly,

ly, as it must be confess'd she is ; — but
to proceed :

Ismena having accepted the challenge
of sir Charles, she cut the cards, and
tried once more what chance would do
for her ; — chance was still against her,
and sir Charles again the conqueror. —
The game being over, she said laughing :

Ismena. ‘ Well, — I may now sing
‘ Fortune is my foe, — and content my-
‘ self, for the remainder of this night,
‘ with being an humble spectator of other
‘ people’s diversion, since I am not in a
‘ condition to partake of it myself,’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ It will be your
‘ own fault then, madam, if you are ; —
‘ I believe I have an hundred and some
‘ odd pieces about me, which are all at
‘ your devotion.’

Ismena. ‘ I thank you, sir Charles ;
‘ but I do not chuse to risque so much
‘ as that at one sitting : — I do not care,
‘ however, if I become your debtor for
‘ twenty pieces.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ You do me a
‘ pleasure, madam, in accepting any part
‘ of the offer I made you ; — there is
VOL. III. E ‘ the

‘ the trifle you mention, if you want
‘ more I beg you will command it.’

Ismena. ‘ No, sir, I am determin’d
‘ to play no farther than this, — I am
‘ much oblig’d to you for the favour,
‘ and will return it to-morrow morning.’

She then took up the twenty guineas sir Charles had laid down and put them into her purse; but while she was doing so, he reply’d to her last words in this manner :

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ There is no occasion, madam, for you to give yourself the trouble of sending this trifle to me, — I have business that will bring me into your neighbourhood to-morrow morning, and if you are so good to permit me that honour, will wait on you about twelve.

Ismena. ‘ You may depend, sir, on my being at home.’

Clarinda, who had not open’d her mouth all this time, no sooner saw her fair friend receive the money than she laid her hand on hers, and with a gay air said to her :

Clarinda.

Clarinda. ‘ Now, my dear, I am
‘ ready for you, if you please, and wil-
‘ ling to venture as much with you as
‘ you have borrow’d of sir Charles.’

To this *Ismena* reply’d, with more se-
riousness than she was wont to put on :

Ismena. ‘ No, madam, — I have
‘ been very unlucky here, and am re-
‘ solved to change hands ; — I see lady
‘ Longmore has given out at the Whist
‘ table yonder, — I’ll go and take her
‘ place.’

With these words she rose hastily from
her seat and did as she had said, without
waiting to hear any thing that might be
offer’d to detain her by either of those she
had been playing with. — Sir Charles
Fairlove follow’d her to the other table,
and stood behind her chair till he saw her
win more than the sum he had lent her.

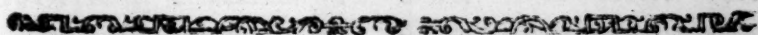
On the company’s breaking up she
look’d round the room for sir Charles, in
order, as I suppose, to return the money to
him ; but if she had any such design he had
taken care to prevent the execution of it,
by leaving the place some little time be-
fore she had done playing.

This action of sir Charles, join'd to some amorous glances I had perceived him to regard her with, made me suspect he had some farther view than mere complaisance in what he had done ; but as he was generally accounted a man of honour, and she had an unblemish'd character, I suspended my judgment 'till I should see the event of the visit she had promised to receive from him the next morning.

After I had quitted this scene of gay confusion, as mr. Addison elegantly expresses it, and had time to ruminate on the transactions that evening had presented me with, sir Charles Fairlove and Ismena ran very much in my head, but did not so totally engross my attention as to make me negligent to all others : — I had heard several of the assembly say to each other, that miss Allmode was a most beautiful young creature, and would certainly be the reigning toast of the town if not spoil'd by the affectation of her mother ; and this distinct description gave me a curiosity both to see the girl, and in what manner her self-sufficient ladyship behaved towards her.

Accordingly I laid down a plan for my progression the next morning, which was this : — to go to lady Allmode's as
early

early as it was reasonable to suppose she and her daughter would be stirring, and from thence pass on to the apartment of Ismena at the time sir Charles Fairlove had appointed to be there; and then, having fully settled this point in my mind, began to remember that the night was very far advanced, and went to-bed, as it is probable some of my readers may find it necessary to do at this time.



CHAP. VI.

Contains such things as are not often to be met with, neither in the one nor the other sex; yet are, or at least ought to be, equally interesting to both.

I ROSE the next morning more early than I had been for the most part accustomed to do, in order to prepare for the two visits I intended to make; but in spite of all the expedition I could practice, I found myself obliged to postpone either the one or other 'till another day.

So much time was elapsed, first in transcribing what I had been witness of at lady Playfeild's, and then in getting the

dialogues engrav'd on my Tablets expunged by the pure fingers of my yet unpolluted virgin, that when all was ready the clock wanted but a very few minutes of striking twelve.

I hesitated not whether I should go to lady Allmode's or to Ismena; for besides being very much prepossess'd in favour of the latter, I did not doubt of meeting with something of more consequence in her interview with sir Charles Fairlove than I could expect to find in any discourse between lady Allmode and her daughter; — I went thither in a lucky time, — sir Charles Fairlove was just stepping out of his chair when I came to the door, — I followed him up stairs, and Ismena received him with a great deal of gaiety, but accompany'd with an equal air of modesty; — as soon as they were seated, she said to him:

Ismena. ‘Your money was very fortunate to me, sir Charles, I did not lose one guinea after I became your borrower.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘Madam, I congratulate myself for being so happy to serve you, tho’ on so insignificant an occasion; — but should be better pleased

‘ to have it in my power to do so in
‘ much greater things.’

Ismena. ‘ I doubt not of your gene-
‘ rousity to persons in distress, and if ever
‘ I am reduced to the same exigence again,
‘ it is likely may have recourse to the
‘ same hand for relief; — in the mean
‘ time, sir Charles, permit me to return the
‘ favour you have already conferr’d upon
‘ me.’

In speaking this she drew out her purse
and counted twenty guineas on the table,
which sir Charles took up and put into
his pocket with a very careless air; —
saying at the same time:

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ This trifle, ma-
‘ dam, is neither worth your returning
‘ nor my receiving, nor should I have
‘ ever thought on it, if I had not given
‘ you credit on an infinitely more valuable
‘ account.’

Ismena. ‘ Credit! — As how, sir
‘ Charles?’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Yes, madam,
‘ — a debt which I am too impatient to
‘ wait long for the payment of, and am
‘ now come to claim.’

Ismena. ‘ You rally well, fir Charles ;
‘ — but as I cannot comprehend the pur-
‘ port, am not prepared to give an answer.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ No, i’faith, ma-
‘ dam, you will find me extremely serious ;
‘ — but sure you cannot be so strangely
‘ forgetful as not to recollect what you
‘ lost to me last night at play ?’

Ismena. ‘ I lost nothing but what I
‘ paid, fir Charles.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Nothing, ma-
‘ dam ?’

Ismena. ‘ No, upon my honour.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ You have
‘ named the very thing, — your honour,
‘ madam ; — when a lady ventures her
‘ honour at a gaming-table, and is so un-
‘ lucky as to lose, she must expect to pay
‘ the forfeit.’

Ismena. ‘ What do you mean, fir
‘ Charles ?’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ My meaning
‘ needs no explanation, madam ; — you
‘ lost your honour to me, and I now de-
‘ mand

‘mand the immediate possession of what
‘I fairly won, and which if you refuse to
‘yield I have a right to seize.’

Ismena. ‘Ridiculous.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘Madam, the
‘contempt you treat my pretensions with
‘take not away the validity of them; —
‘what was once your honour is now no
‘longer so, but mine, and at my disposal;
‘— and you would not, sure, go about
‘to defraud me of the good that fortune
‘has bestowed upon me?’

With these words he threw his arms
about her waist, with a freedom which
shew’d he indeed look’d upon her as his
own: — she seem’d a little alarm’d at
this action, and starting some paces from
him, endeavour’d to repulse the temerity
he was guilty of, by saying to him:

Ismena. ‘Forbear; — this fooling is
‘offensive.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘Madam, this
‘coyness is trifling; — I am surpris’d
‘you will oblige me to have recourse to
‘force for what is so much my due, and
‘I should set a higher value upon it
‘cheerfully resign’d. — Come, madam,

‘ — I think this way leads to your bed-chamber.’

He then catch’d hold of her a second time, and made an offer to bear her into another room ; — the grasp he had taken of her was not so strenuous, however, but that she easily disengag’d herself ; and having done so, cry’d out with a voice and air full of the extremest disdain.

Ismena. ‘ ’Till this action I scarce could think you were in earnest : — base, and presuming man, How dare you entertain thoughts so unworthy of me !’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ How dare you, madam, hazard on the chance of a game at cards what seems so precious to you ?’

Ismena. ‘ Oh, despicable ! — to turn that into a matter of seriousness which you well know was only meant in jest.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ We men, madam, take all the advantages we can when we play with a fine woman ; and you may be assured I shall not easily be pre-

‘prevailed upon to relinquish those I
‘have gain’d over you.’

Ismena. ‘The vain idea will little
‘avail your vile purpose.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘You may be
‘mistaken, madam; — the laws of West-
‘minster-Hall, indeed, will scarcely take
‘any cognizance of an affair of this
‘nature; — but those laws by which the
‘polite world are chiefly govern’d, I mean
‘the laws of gaming, will infallibly give
‘it on my side; that pride of your’s will
‘be a good deal humbled when you see
‘your stake of honour become the public
‘jest, and all that has pass’d between us
‘the subject of a news-paper.’

Ismena. ‘I am confounded! — you
‘cannot certainly be the monster you ap-
‘pear!’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘I would not
‘wish you, madam, to put me to the
‘proof.’

Ismena. ‘Oh, Heavens! — to what
‘has one unguarded word exposed me!’

She could not utter this exclamation
without letting fall some tears, which I

perceived had a great effect on sir Charles, by the change it occasioned in his countenance ; — he affected, however, to take no notice of it, and resuming his former boldness went on :

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ You see, madam, how it is ; — you are intirely in my power, and if I cannot have my agreement, I will have my revenge, or at least an equivalent for both.’

Ismena. ‘ What equivalent ! — say, — tell me at once !’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ You must redeem your forfeit honour by a sum of money.’

Ismena. ‘ Name it then.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Let me consider, madam, — a woman’s honour, as times now are, and beauty renders itself so cheap, will bare but a low price at the market ; but as you are well-born, — well accomplish’d, — are extremely handsome, and have more perfections, both of mind and body, than most of your sex can boast of, — I think five hundred pounds is the least I can demand.’

If-

Ismena. ‘ You shall have it, sir.’

With this she ran hastily to a little cabinet that stood in the room, and having taken from thence what she wanted, turn’d again to the table, saying,

Ismena. ‘ Those two Bank-bills, sir, contain the sum you mention, — take them, I beseech you, and ease me of your presence.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ I must first examine, madam, if they are genuine : — yes they are right ; — and now, methinks, ’tis pity to rob you of so much money, — five hundred pounds will purchase five hundred pretty trinkets, and I cannot receive it without feeling some concern.’

Ismena. ‘ Oh, sir Charles, you need be under no concern on that score ; — were it five times the sum, nay my whole fortune, I would gladly give it to be rid for ever both of you and your impudent demand.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Yet, in spite of all this severity, I shall willingly restore these bills on one condition.’

If-

Ismena. ‘ Sir, I shall make no conditions with you; — therefore be gone and leave me.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Not till you have heard me, madam; — the condition I would stipulate is only this, — that you will make a solemn promise never to play again, except for mere diversion, with some select friends who you are certain will take no ungenerous advantage of you.’

Ismena. ‘ There is little occasion for me to bind myself by a promise to avoid a thing which I have already proved so mischievous; — the insults I have received from you will make me henceforth detest the sight of cards, and fly the society of all who pursue that dangerous amusement.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ It is enough; — my ends are fully answered; and thus, on my knees let me restore your bills, and with them a heart which long has been devoted to you, and never harbour’d a wish to your dishonour.’

Never had I known greater anxiety for any thing not relating to myself, or my
par-

particular friends, than I did for the issue of this conversation ; — I had been extremely scandalized at some part of sir Charles's behaviour ; yet, by many indications, could not set him down in my mind for the mercenary villain he affected to be, and was now as much rejoiced to see a likelihood of not having been deceived in my conjectures in his favour, as the reader will presently be convinced.

Ismena, being too much amazed at this sudden turn to make an immediate reply, he went on thus, — still kneeling :

Sir Charees Fairlove. ‘ Oh, Ismena ;
‘ forgive the seeming brutality I have
‘ been guilty of ; — I counterfeited the
‘ libertine, the villain, only to shew you
‘ there was a possibility for you to have
‘ met with such a one in reality ; and
‘ assum'd the most odious character, in
‘ order to render your's more truly
‘ adorable : — the tender passion you in-
‘ spir'd me with has made me keep a
‘ watchful eye over all your actions ; — I
‘ found you perfect in every thing ex-
‘ cept a too great readiness to follow the
‘ example of others in the destructive love
‘ of play ; — I know the dangers to which
‘ your sex are exposed by it, and that
‘ there

‘ there were many snares spread for your
 ‘ innocence in particular ; by this means
 ‘ even last night some there were in com-
 ‘ pany who wanted but the same opportu-
 ‘ nity I had to behave as I have done,
 ‘ though with far different views. — Oh !
 ‘ pardon, therefore, the only stratagem I
 ‘ could think of to clear your mind of a
 ‘ propensity which might in time have
 ‘ sullied all its brightness.’

Ismena. ‘ Rise, sir Charles ; — the
 ‘ diversity, I might say, indeed, the per-
 ‘ plexity of my thoughts hinder’d me,
 ‘ ’till now, from observing the posture
 ‘ you were in ; — pray be seated, sir. —
 ‘ If I may give credit to your words, I
 ‘ am infinitely oblig’d to you for the
 ‘ care you took of my reputation, when
 ‘ you saw it so totally neglected by my-
 ‘ self.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ No, madam ;
 ‘ say not so ; — I dare believe you never
 ‘ have fail’d in a due regard for reputa-
 ‘ tion, and am certain that the breath of
 ‘ slander has never presum’d to blast it ;
 ‘ and I could not mean to reproach you
 ‘ for any thing that has been, but to
 ‘ warn you against what might be ; — an
 ‘ immoderate inclination for gaming in
 ‘ your sex, I take to be the same as an
 ‘ immo-

‘ immoderate inclination to drinking is
‘ in ours, both are equally intoxicating
‘ and destructive to right reason; they
‘ make the brain grow giddy, incapable
‘ of reflection, or any other pursuit than
‘ the darling folly, and they run head-
‘ long on, envelop’d in a mist of errors,
‘ where fortune, fame, and peace of mind
‘ are sometimes irrecoverably lost.’

Ismena. ‘ Oh, sir Charles, you have
‘ open’d my eyes to see that black abyfs
‘ into which my inadvertency might one
‘ day have plunged me.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ I know very well,
‘ madam, that you wanted only to be re-
‘ minded of the danger to enable you to
‘ avoid it; — the manner in which I have
‘ done so may have, perhaps, appear’d
‘ too presuming; but I fear’d more
‘ gentle methods might not have had the
‘ effect.’

Ismena. ‘ Make no apologies, sir
‘ Charles, — I am now convinced you
‘ meant me well, and I thank you for it.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ If you accept
‘ it as a proof of friendship, it may in
‘ time engage you to believe that a sincere
‘ and tender friendship in a person of
‘ my

‘ my sex to one of yours deserves a softer
‘ name, and call it love.’

Ismena. ‘ We will not cavil about
‘ names, but must acknowledge, sir
‘ Charles, by what motive soever you
‘ have been actuated, the benefit is mine.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ How bless’d
‘ am I in this confession ! — But, charm-
‘ ing Ismena, may I not be permitted to
‘ wait on you sometimes, and have leave
‘ to hope the services I shall hereafter
‘ pay you will not be rejected ?’

Ismena. ‘ I flatter myself with being
‘ able to regulate my future conduct so
‘ as not to give you occasion to offer any
‘ of that frightful sort you have done this
‘ morning ; and if I should relapse into
‘ my former errors, could neither expect
‘ nor deserve you should take the same
‘ trouble for my reformation ; — there-
‘ fore, I think, may safely venture to
‘ admit your visits.

She spoke these words with so obliging
a smile, that sir Charles could not forbear
testifying the transport he was in by im-
printing several passionate kisses on one
of her hands, after which, looking on
her

her with an equal mixture of tenderness and respect, he said,

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Incomparable
‘ Ismena ! how impossible is it for me to
‘ express either what you deserve, or what
‘ I feel in a full sensibility of your per-
‘ fections ?’

Ismena. ‘ I desire you will not go
‘ about to express either the one or the
‘ other ; — the only merit I can boast of is
‘ in being so early convinced of my fault,
‘ and that I am so is wholly owing to your-
‘ self ; — for I confess to you, sir Charles,
‘ that though it is but lately I have be-
‘ gun to like play at all, yet by con-
‘ versing with those who seem to have no
‘ other way of passing their time, it grew
‘ by very swift degrees more pleasing to
‘ me ; and I believe that it would, in time,
‘ have become so habitual to me, that I
‘ should have expected the hour of sitting
‘ down to cards as naturally as that of sit-
‘ ting down to dinner ; — but in the
‘ mirror you have presented to me, I
‘ now see that to indulge this amusement
‘ to an excess, is not only a folly below
‘ the dignity of a thinking mind, but also
‘ a kind of Scylla or Caribdes, formed by
‘ ourselves in the ocean of life, as if on
pur-

‘ purpose to wreck our fortunes, honour,
‘ reputation, and every thing that is dear.

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Oh, madam!
‘ every word you speak on this occasion
‘ thrills me to the very soul; — I am
‘ charm’d, — I am ravish’d to find in a
‘ person of your sex and years such solid
‘ reason, — such an amazing quickness of
‘ apprehension.’

Ismena. ‘ You are relapsing into the
‘ panegyric strain; but I will hear no more
‘ of it: — you must give me leave to
‘ play the Monitor in my turn, — I
‘ have been your convert, and you must
‘ now be mine; — remember, sir Charles,
‘ that to listen to the tongue of flattery is
‘ no less pernicious than the folly you
‘ have taught me to be ashamed of.’

Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ I grant it is,
‘ madam; but the just praises of a real
‘ virtue cannot cause a blush either in the
‘ face of the giver or the receiver.’

Ismena. ‘ Well, I find you will have
‘ the better of the argument, whether the
‘ tenet you take upon you to maintain be
‘ right or wrong; — therefore to put an
‘ end to it, What think you of a turn or
‘ two in the Mall this morning?’

Sir

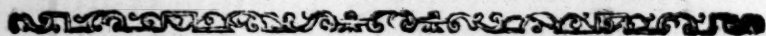
Sir Charles Fairlove. ‘ Madam, I shall
‘ be happy to attend you any where.’

She then call’d for her capuchin, and little muff, which being immediately brought, sir Charles gave her his hand to lead her down stairs, and I retired to my apartment,

I had met with nothing a great while that gave me a more sensible satisfaction than to find a lady such as Ismena, in all the pride of blooming youth, beautiful, gay, and surrounded with a crowd of flatterers, bear with so much chearfulness the conviction of her error, and testify so much gratitude to the person to whom she was indebted for her reformation.

The rough method he had taken for this purpose, was so far from raising any resentment in her, after once knowing the motive, that she look’d upon him as her best friend, esteem’d and loved him for it; — conscious that it required no less than such a proceeding to rouse her from that thoughtlessness which alone had made her fall into an error, the danger of which she might otherwise have too late perceived.

I thought that I discovered something in these two accomplish'd persons, that seem'd to me as if Heaven had form'd and ordain'd them for each other, and I soon found that I had not been mistaken;—they are now married with the highest approbation of all the friends and kindred on both sides; and in the opinion of as many as have the pleasure of their acquaintance, bid fair to be one of the most happy pairs that ever enter'd into Hymen's bands.



C H A P. VII.

The Author has been in some debate within himself, whether he should insert or not, as he is conscious it will be little relish'd by the fashionable genteel part of his readers; — and what is still worse, can afford neither much entertainment, nor much improvement to the others.

THERE is something very unaccountable in an over-curious disposition; — it makes us eager, impatient, anxious, indefatigable, in prying into things which promise us not the least pleasure

sure in the discovery of when known ; — a reader who has not this propensity in his nature, will doubtless think, by what I said of lady Allmode in the fifth Chapter of this Book, that I had already seen enough of her behaviour to keep me from being desirous of seeing more ; but this is judging according to the rules of right reason ; whereas a person who neglects his own affairs, to find out the secrets of others with whom he has no concern, cannot be supposed to have any.

But as every one is willing to find some excuse or other, even for the silliest things he can be guilty of ; and according to the vulgar phrase, put pillows under his elbows ; so I thought that in being a spectator of lady Allmode's conduct in her own family, and the manner in which she train'd up her daughter, something might present itself to me that would more than compensate for the time I should expend in going to her house.

How far the public may be of my opinion in this point must be left to the determination of hereafter ; for the humour of the present age is so fluctuating and uncertain, that it is an utter impossibility to foresee either what will please or what offend, — as a poet of many
centu-

centuries ago expresses himself on a parallel occasion :

——— ‘ Inconstant still and various,
 ‘ There’s no to-morrow in us like to-
 ‘ day ;
 ‘ This hour we are cloudy, fullen and
 ‘ severe ;
 ‘ The next, with madding mirth di-
 ‘ sturb the air.’

But all this is foreign to the purpose, and therefore impertinent ; — it is enough to say that I went, without repeating the motive that induced me to it ; — I shall therefore add no more, but proceed to the success of my visit.

I gain’d an easy access, the door happening to be open just as I reach’d it, to let out a footman in a gay livery, who had come to deliver some message ; but was a good deal bewilder’d on my entrance, as I had never been in the house before, and was intirely unacquainted with the situation of any of the rooms ; — I judg’d, however, that as it was morning, her ladyship would probably be above stairs ; — on my coming to the top of the stair-case I was as much at a loss as before ; — I perceived there were several rooms, but the doors of them all
 were

were shut, and I durst not touch the look of any one of them for fear I should be heard by those who might chance to be within.

The measure of time is always doubled when we wait for an event with impatience ; — I remain'd not long, however, in this dilemma, — a servant came running hastily up the back stairs at the farther end of the gallery, with some drinking glasses on a silver waiter in his hand, — I follow'd him into a room where a woman, who by her appearance I guess'd was her ladyship's Abigail, received from him what he had brought, and carried it into an inner-chamber, the door of which she shut after her, but not so suddenly as to prevent my entering with her.

Here I found lady Allmode ; but had she appear'd to me in any other place, should never have known her for the same I had seen at lady Playfeild's route, — so vast a difference is it in the power of art sometimes to make.

At the time of my coming in she was under the operation of having her eyebrows shaped with a small pair of pincers, by one of those persons who go by the name

of Tyre-women; but, in my opinion, ought rather to be call'd face-menders, since their business is not so much to ornament the head as to rectify the defects of the features: — the important work being over, lady Allmode turn'd to a magnifier that stood upon her toylet, to see if all was right, and having look'd into it, cried out hastily:

Lady Allmode. ‘ Oh, mrs. Prim, —
 ‘ sure your eyes are in eclipse to day! —
 ‘ you have left no less than three exuberant hairs on my right brow, and I
 ‘ think arch'd it somewhat higher than
 ‘ the other.’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ I beg a thousand pardons
 ‘ of your ladyship, but I will presently
 ‘ remedy that error.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Do so.’

On this the artist employ'd her little instrument for a second essay, — after which lady Allmode look'd in the glass again and said,

Lady Allmode. ‘ It is very well now;
 ‘ — but I look wretchedly to day, —
 ‘ and it is no wonder; — What do you
 ‘ think, mrs. Prim, — that careless oaf
 ‘ there

‘ there put me to bed last night without
‘ my Sperma-Ceti mask.’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ That was a great omission,
‘ indeed, madam ; — but your ladyship
‘ must forgive it, mrs. Pinup does
‘ not use to neglect these things.’

Pinup. ‘ I am very sorry for it, mrs.
‘ Prim ; — but it was so late when her
‘ ladyship went to bed ; — and her ladyship
‘ was so sleepy.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ And your foolship
‘ was so sleepy too, I suppose. — But
‘ that is not all, mrs. Prim, — the creature
‘ threw it into some corner or other
‘ where Veni got at it, and this morning
‘ it was found half devour’d.’

Pinup. ‘ Your ladyship knows I have
‘ almost cried my eyes out about it, —
‘ and that I offer’d to bespeak another,
‘ and pay for it out of my own pocket.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Pay for it, idiot. —
‘ But tell me, creature, what attonement
‘ can’st thou ever make for these depredations
‘ on my countenance ? — Here I
‘ shall lose a whole day ; for ’tis impossible
‘ I can think of appearing in public ;
‘ and do’st thou consider, wench, that a
‘ day

‘ day wasted in private is an age in the
‘ life of a woman of quality ?’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ ’Tis very true, madam ;
‘ — but I dare answer for mrs. Pinup,
‘ that she will never be guilty of the like
‘ fault again ; therefore I beg your lady-
‘ ship will forgive her.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Yes, yes, — I have
‘ forgiven her, — and I do forgive her ;
‘ but she must expect to be told of it
‘ sometimes : — if she had lived with
‘ some ladies they would have turned her
‘ out of doors that instant ; — *mais tou-*
‘ *jours les douceurs du coeur* lay an em-
‘ bargo on my indignation.’

Pinup. ‘ Your ladyship is all good-
‘ nefs.’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ There are few such
‘ ladies.’

Pinup. ‘ No, indeed ; — and I could
‘ tear myself to pieces for having, thro’
‘ negligence, offended so sweet a lady.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Well, well, — say no
‘ more about it ; — I am sorry I struck
‘ you in the heat of my resentment ; —
‘ but take the Dresden suit I had on yester-
‘ day,

‘ day, and let me see you in it on Sunday.’

Pinup. ‘ I humbly thank your ladyship.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Say no more of it. — Oh, *mon Dieu* ! I begin to feel the effects of my disconcertion ; — every membrane throughout my whole frame has a pulsation in it ; — give me something to take this instant, or I shall faint.’

Pinup. ‘ I have it ready, madam. — I suppose your ladyship chuses brandy ?’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Aye ; — I think brandy is the best composure of the animal faculties : — a little more ; — still nearer to the top of the glass ; — hold, ’tis very well, I do not love it running over. — Now fill for mrs. Prim. — Pray drink, mrs. Prim, — ’tis right Coniac, I assure you.’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ I know your ladyship has the best of every thing : — your ladyship’s good health.

Lady Allmode. ‘ I thank you, mrs. Prim. — But as to the Sperma-Ceti
F 3 ‘ mask,

‘ mask, is it not possible for you to get
‘ one ready for me before I sleep, — else
‘ my face will be a perfect nutmeg-grater
‘ by to-morrow morning ?’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ Oh, your ladyship need
‘ be under no apprehensions on that
‘ score, — I always keep several of these
‘ commodities prepar’d, — they want
‘ only sprinkling with a little Orange-
‘ flower water, to take off the scent ; —
‘ I will send your ladyship one this after-
‘ noon. — But is not your ladyship out
‘ of Pearl-powder, you had but one
‘ ounce last week ?’

Lady Allmode. ‘ No, nor I do not
‘ think of having any more, — it leaves
‘ a certain roughness on the skin which is
‘ disagreeable ; — I will use nothing but
‘ Italian pots for the future ; — the paste
‘ incorporates itself, as it were, with the
‘ flesh, and gives a kind of fatty de-
‘ licacy to it ; — let me have two pots.’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ Yes, madam. — Has
‘ your ladyship any farther commands ?’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Yes, you may send
‘ me a box of red for my cheeks ; — but
‘ do not let it be quite so high-colour’d
‘ as the last.’

Mrs.

Mrs. Prim. ‘ I shall take care to mix
‘ it so as to please your ladyship.’

In speaking this she was preparing to make her exit with abundance of low curtsies; but lady Allmode would not suffer her to depart without taking another dram.

Lady Allmode. ‘ Stay, mrs. Prim, —
‘ I must give you a taste of some of my
‘ Italian cordials; — I had a fresh chest
‘ came in yesterday, with twelve bottles
‘ all of different sorts; — Will you have
‘ the Rosafoli, La Bergamotta, La Flo-
‘ retta, or La Citroni?’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ Alack, madam, these
‘ rich things come so seldom in my way
‘ that I am no judge of them; — but
‘ since your ladyship is so good, I shall
‘ take a little of any one of them.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Fetch La Floretta,
‘ Pinup. — You must know, mrs. Prim,
‘ that this is a quintessence extracted
‘ from the most fragrant flowers the gar-
‘ den of the world affords.’

Mrs. Prim. ‘ ’Tis extremely fine, indeed, madam ; — I never tasted any thing like it.’

The good woman was so charm’d with the flavour of this exotic liquor, that to prolong it as much as she could, she sipp’d it like a hot dish of Tea ; — lady Allmode perceiving her so delighted, might probably have been induced to give her another glass, if word had not been brought that mr Ruben the Jew was come to wait upon her ladyship, on which the bottles and glasses were hurry’d away, and mrs. Prim took her leave.

The Jew was presently introduced, and received by lady Allmode with the utmost courtesy and affability, and after making him be seated she said to him :

Lady Allmode. ‘ You are a great stranger, mr. Ruben ; — I have not seen you this long time, and was quite impatient to congratulate you, and the whole Hebrew nation, on the late act pass’d in your favour.’

Ruben. ‘ Me do most humly dank your ladyship ;—we did, indeed, obtain it wid mush greater facility dan we expected,

‘pected, in spite of all de fine promise
‘had been a long time ago.’

Lady Allmode. ‘I assure you, mr.
‘Ruben, that I was perfectly transported
‘when I found the bill had pass’d both
‘houses. — I dare say his Grace was
‘very serviceable to you on this occa-
‘sion.’

Ruben. ‘Yes, madam, we are much
‘obliged to his Grace, as well as to an
‘honourable gentleman in de lower house;
‘but our acknowledgments are chiefly to
‘de good Lord B — ps.’

Lady Allmode. ‘True, mr. Ruben ;
‘for if they had made any opposition to
‘it, or, at least, any worth mentioning,
‘the rabble would presently have taken
‘it into their heads that their religion
‘was in danger, and made as great a
‘clamour against Juadism as in a former
‘reign they did against Popery.’

Ruben, ‘We do not care what dese
‘Skellams tink ; — if dey offer to affront
‘us, we shall know how to be revenged :
‘— we have de same law, de same pri-
‘veledge, as demselves.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ The vulgar are not
‘ to be regarded; — they are no more
‘ than moving clods of earth; — but
‘ you must own, mr. Ruben, that for the
‘ honour of the English nation, the nobility and gentry, those of taste I mean,
‘ are intirely on your side.’

Ruben. ‘ Some of dem have been our
‘ good friends indeed; and it is vary true
‘ that we have received more favours
‘ from de English dan from any nation in
‘ de world: — in all de Popish countries,
‘ and, indeed, in most of de Protestants
‘ one too, ve have been driven from deir
‘ cities, and scatter’d like chaff before de
‘ vind, — treated as vagrants, and made
‘ to wear upon our heads or on our coats,
‘ some badge or oder of infamy and contempt; but by dis hospitable act of de
‘ Legislature, ve shall be gather’d together
‘ like sheep into one fold, and have de
‘ liberty to settle and multiply in dis
‘ land of plenty.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ I hope, mr. Ruben,
‘ it will prove a second Canaan to you.
‘ — But pray what new curiosities does
‘ your warehouse afford?’

Ruben.

Ruben. ‘ It was dat I did come to
‘ tell your ladyship ; — me have de fine
‘ German work for de head-dress, de
‘ ruffle and de tippit for de ladies, far
‘ exceeding de Dresden ; — me have de
‘ curious littel pictures for de closet, from
‘ Italy, and handkerchiefs dat will not
‘ lose deir scent with vashing ; — den me
‘ have some pieces of rich embroidery
‘ from Lyons, and gloves from Mar-
‘ seilles ; — snuff of de right Batavian
‘ manufacture ; — Japonees under petti-
‘ coates, — and oder tings, just imported
‘ from all parts of de world.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Well, — you Jews
‘ are certainly the most charming people
‘ upon earth, — you deal in every thing,
‘ — Who can deny that you are useful
‘ members of a common-wealth ? — I
‘ will come in a day or two to your
‘ warehouse, and rid you of some part of
‘ your cargo.’

Ruben. ‘ Me fall be proud to see your
‘ ladyship ; — but me must now take my
‘ leave, — me am obliged to wait on lady
‘ Fantasye, — she did send to speak vid
‘ me dis morning.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Oh, then I will not detain you ; I know her ladyship is a good customer.’

Ruben. ‘ Pretty well, madam ; — she pay me, tho’ she do no body else.— Your ladyship’s most obedient servant.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Your’s, mr. Ruben. — Pinup, wait on mr. Ruben down stairs.’

The entertainment I had hitherto met with at this lady’s had seem’d so insipid to me, that I was in the mind to quit her apartment when mr. Ruben did, and accordingly follow’d him and Pinup out of the room ; — but the girl had no sooner shut the chamber door behind her than the goatish Jew turn’d upon her, and before she was aware, catch’d her in his arms and half smother’d her with kisses ; — she struggled with all her might, and having broke from him, rubb’d her mouth with her apron, — spit and cry’d,

Pinup. ‘ I wonder at your impudence, mr. Ruben, — do you think I would be pull’d and haul’d about by a Jew ?’

Ruben. ‘ Hush, — don’t be so angry, mrs. Pinup, — I will give you one pretty ting.’

Pinup.

Pinup. ‘ Hang your pretty things,
‘ and yourself too, — get down stairs, or
‘ I will call to some body to shew you out ;
‘ — the Devil shall wait on you for
‘ me.’

The Jew said no more, but ran so hastily down stairs, that as Pinup was between us, and the passage we were in very narrow, it was impossible for me to slip by, without being felt either by the one or the other.

Pinup was returning to her lady’s chamber, but met her just coming out in order to pass into another room, on seeing her she said to her :

Lady Allmode. ‘ I think this girl takes
‘ a long time in dressing, — go and see
‘ if she is ready, and bid her come to
‘ me.’

Finding now that there was some probability of my seeing the young lady, which had been, indeed, the chief motive of my going thither, I attended lady Allmode where she went, and placed myself in one corner of the room ; where I did not wait above three or four minutes before Pinup, who had gone immediately

mediately on her errand, return'd leading miss Allmode.

She seemed to be about thirteen or fourteen years of age ; — her face was extremely pretty, and I believe nature had given her a shape no less excellent, if it had not been deform'd by her taylor and mantua-maker ; — I need not describe in what manner, since it is enough to say, that every thing about her was in the extremity of the present fashion.

On her approach lady Allmode took her by the arm, — turn'd her round several times, and examined her whole dress from head to foot ; — after which, looking very well pleased, she said :

Lady Allmode. ‘ Ay, miss, now you
‘ look like what you are ; — I protest, I
‘ scarce knew you for my own child, in
‘ the obsolete condition you came from
‘ the country. — Are you not highly
‘ delighted with yourself ?’

Miss Allmode. ‘ No, indeed, madam,
‘ — I think that since 'tis the fashion to
‘ have one's cloaths made in this manner,
‘ there ought to be as many chimnies in
‘ a room as there are chairs.’

Lady

Lady Allmode. ‘ Sure, miss, you are not cold ?’

Miss Allmode. ‘ It would be very strange, madam, if I were not, when my stays are so contrived that the air comes down to the very bottom of my back, and below the pit of my stomach, and my petticoats so short that I am every minute fancying I have tuck’d them up in order to have my legs and feet wash’d ; — then as to my ears, I do declare I feel the wind blow from the one to the other, and pierces into my very brain.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Oh fye, miss ; — this being in the country has spoiled you : — whatever is the fashion is never either too cold or too hot.’

Miss Allmode. I must beg your ladyship’s pardon ; for I am certain this fashion is a great deal too much of both ; — the tightness of my sleeves, the load of flounces at my elbows, and the huge semi-circles, as heavy as panniers, hanging on each hip, make some parts of me sweat while all the rest are freezing.’

Lady

Lady Allmode. ‘ On hideous ! — fright-
 ‘ ful ! — sweat ! — what a word is there
 ‘ from the mouth of a fine young lady !
 ‘ — Whenever you have any occasion to
 ‘ complain of too much warmth, you
 ‘ should always say — I perspire : — but I
 ‘ am surpris’d you should not be charm’d
 ‘ with so becoming a dress.’

Miss Allmode. ‘ I feel uneasy, and
 ‘ quite uncomfortable, madam.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ A little use will re-
 ‘ concile you to it. — Without vanity,
 ‘ miss, you are exceeding handsome ; —
 ‘ and now I have made you fit to appear
 ‘ in public, the praises that will be given
 ‘ you, and the fine things said on your
 ‘ beauty, will raise such a gaiety *du*
 ‘ *coeur*, as will make you forget all that
 ‘ you call uncomfortable.’

Miss Allmode. ‘ I should be glad, ma-
 ‘ dam, if any thing would do that.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ You must learn to
 ‘ know yourself, miss ; — look in the
 ‘ glass ; — you have fine eyes, — a very
 ‘ lovely mouth, — a well-turn’d face, —
 ‘ a delicate complexion, good hair : —
 ‘ in fine, you are a complete beauty ; —
 ‘ but

‘ but what is beauty without the possessor
‘ understands how to manage it to advantage ; — a milk-maid may be a beauty,
‘ and no one take any notice of her ; —
‘ you must practice the art of displaying
‘ every charm, and rendering yourself
‘ conspicuous.’

Miss Allmode. ‘ Indeed, madam, I am
‘ quite ignorant of these things.’

Lady Allmode. ‘ I perceive you are, miss ;
‘ — but that is not your fault ; — my formal aunt has never given you any instructions in this point, I suppose ; — a
‘ few lessons, however, will soon put you
‘ in the way to make the most of what nature has bestow’d upon you : — In the first
‘ place, miss, you must be sure to thrust
‘ out your chin as far as you are able ; —
‘ when you come into a room always let
‘ your chin be the first thing seen of you,
‘ — as it were the harbinger of the rest
‘ of your person. — Secondly, you must
‘ never keep your two hands together,
‘ in that stiff country manner you now
‘ do, for above the space of a moment ;
‘ but throw sometimes the one and sometimes the other carelessly back, and
‘ lean it on your hip ; but when you are
‘ speaking, be sure to employ both in
‘ gestures that may enforce attention to
‘ what

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‘ but throw sometimes the one and sometimes the other carelessly back, and
‘ lean it on your hip ; but when you are
‘ speaking, be sure to employ both in
‘ gestures that may enforce attention to
‘ what

‘ what you say. — Then, as for your
‘ eyes, miss, — you must always keep
‘ them broad open, and be sure to have
‘ the last look of every one that takes no-
‘ tice of you.’

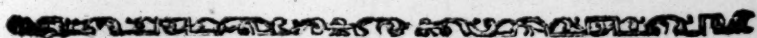
Miss Allmode. ‘ Does your ladyship
‘ mean the men as well as the women ?’

Lady Allmode. ‘ Undoubtedly, — the
‘ men to choose ; — a polite woman,
‘ and who is fashionably genteel, is never
‘ ashamed of any thing she either sees or
‘ hears.’

Her ladyship was going on with some farther directions concerning the management of the eyes, when she was interrupted by a footman, who came to acquaint her that a person who call’d himself monsieur Le Petit Soleil had brought her ladyship a dozen pair of French shoes, — on which she cry’d out in a kind of transport :

Lady Allmode. ‘ Oh bring him up !
‘ bring him up this minute ! — I have
‘ been involved in the utmost distress ;
‘ — I have had nothing but odious Eng-
‘ lish shoes upon my feet for a whole
‘ week past.’

As I was now heartily weary of my situation, and had no curiosity to see either monsieur Le Petit Solee or his French shoes, I took the opportunity of the door being open, and left this scene of folly and affectation, regretting the time I had thrown away in being there.



C H A P. VIII.

Wherein the wonderful power of beauty, when accompany'd with virtue, is display'd, in a very remarkable, as well as affecting occurrence.

VANITY, tho' placed rather among the number of the follies than the vices of human nature, is yet sometimes productive of the very worst we can be guilty of; and the least mischief it does, when indulged to an excess, is to render the person possess'd of it obstinate, proud, impatient of contradiction, deaf to reproof, full of imaginary merit, and apt to despise what is truly so in another.

This weakness, to give it no worse a name, is generally ascribed to the softer sex, who being from their very childhood accusom'd to flattery and praise, are too
ready

ready to believe they are in reality the angels and goddesses that they are told they are ; but in my opinion it is doing great injustice to the ladies to say they are the only culpable, since we often find men who, without having the same excuse, are no less liable to fall into the same error.

Mutantius is one of the most lovely, most graceful, and most accomplish'd gentlemen of the present age ; — he has learning, wit, honour, generosity, and good-nature : — in fine, — he is, both in person and mind, such as might give him a just title to universal admiration, were he but a little less conscious of deserving it, or did not set too high a value upon it.

To render his fine qualities yet more conspicuous, he had the advantages of being descended from a very ancient family, is in possession of an ample fortune both in land and money ; — he had not long been arrived at what is commonly called the age of maturity, before several considerable matches were proposed to him ; — all the men of his acquaintance, who had sisters or daughters to be disposed of, courted his alliance : — whenever he appear'd, the ladies put on their best looks

to

to engage him ; and not a few there were, who could not help betraying by their eyes the secret languishment of their hearts.

Having his choice of so many, was probably the cause that for a long time hinder'd him from attaching himself to any particular object ; — he was polite and gallant to all, but made a serious address to none ; he would pay his morning devoirs to one, walk in the Mall with another, perhaps dine with a third, drink tea with a fourth, attend a fifth to the play, or some other public entertainment : — in a word, he divided his respects so equally to each, that no one of the fair rivals had much reason either to exult on the power of her own charms, or dread those of her competitors.

The little deity of soft desires would not, however, suffer a man so form'd for love to remain always among the number of the insensibles ; — every glance shot from Aristella's eyes was a dart that reach'd his very soul ; — all the different graces he had seen in other beauties seem'd now to him to be summ'd up in her, and the passion she had inspir'd him with, made him think her, as the song says,

‘ Fairest

‘ Fairest where thousands are fair.’

Aristella was, indeed, very lovely, and had been well educated ; but her father, by gaming and other extravagancies, had reduced his estate to so low an ebb, that when divided between four daughters, which he left behind him at his decease, the income was scarce sufficient to buy them cloaths according to their birth ; — two of them, however, were married to tradesmen of good repute in the city, and a third to a gentleman of a small estate in the country ; — Aristella, who was the youngest, and the only one unprovided for, lived sometimes with one and sometimes with another of her sisters, and by this means, having few expences besides her dress, was enabled to appear in as genteel a manner as any woman of a moderate fortune could do.

It was at the house of one of her brother-in-law’s, who was a linnen-draper, and served Mutantius with Hollands and Cambricks, that she first beheld him ; — happening to call there when the master of the shop was abroad, he was desired to walk into the parlour till his return ; — Aristella was at work with her sister when he came in ; but the latter knowing he was
a good

a good customer, threw aside what she was about and received him with a great deal of politeness ; — her husband not coming home so soon as he was expected, she made tea, and afterwards order'd wine to be brought.

Mutantius readily accepted the little regale she presented to him, as it gave him the opportunity of feasting his eyes on the charms of her fair sister : — on their entering into conversation the tongue of Aristella lost her nothing of what her eyes had gain'd ; and as her beauty had in an instant captivated his heart, so her wit rivetted the chain, and made the conquest sure.

The tradesman at last returning, Mutantius, after having agreed for some things he wanted in the shop, and order'd them to be sent home, took an unwilling leave ; but carry'd with him an idea which had afterwards more influence over his mind and actions than he at first imagined.

Love in its beginnings, plays wantonly about the heart, tickling it with flattering images ; but having once got full possession there, rules with tyrannic sway, and bears down all before it : — Mutantius

tius indulged the pleasing contemplation of Aristella's beauty 'till he was no longer able to live without seeing her, and for this purpose went again to the linnen-draper's, pretending there were some things he had forgot to bespeak when he was there before.

After having bought those things which the seeming want of had given him an excuse for going thither so soon again, and some previous discourse on ordinary matters, he told the draper that he should be glad to have his wife's advice concerning the ~~trimming~~ trimming of some shirts which were then making for him; — to this the other reply'd, that his wife would think herself honour'd in doing him any service; but that she was at that time unfortunately abroad.

Mutantius was not sorry to hear she was out of the way, and resum'd briskly, — ‘ Well then, I think it will be equal
‘ to me if the young lady who was with
‘ her when I had the pleasure of drink-
‘ ing tea here, will do me that favour; —
‘ she seem'd, I thought, to have good-
‘ nature enough to grant such a request.’

‘ You mean my sister, sir, cry'd the
‘ draper.’ — I think your wife call'd her
‘ so,

so, answered Mutantius. — ‘ Yes, sir, —
‘ rejoin’d the former ; but she is gone
‘ down to Kent this morning.’ — ‘ I thought
‘ she had lived with you,’ said Mutantius.
‘ — ‘ Not constantly, sir,’ reply’d he ;
‘ but she has left us now sooner than she
‘ would have done, on account of her
‘ sister’s lying-in.’

It was easy for a man of so much wit, and of so much design as Mutantius now had in his head, to get from the honest unsuspecting draper all he wanted to be inform’d of in relation to the circumstances of Aristella.

As the inclinations of this gentleman, vehemently amorous as they were, had not at present the least tendency to marriage with the young beauty, concerning whose affairs he had been so inquisitive, he was far from being mortified on hearing she had no fortune, and was in a manner dependant on her kindred ; nor thought it less conducive to the interest of his passion that she was removed into the country, where he imagined he might find a more easy method of winning her to his desires, than he could have done in town, under the eye of a sister, who, by the little he had seen of her, he perceived to be a woman of great discretion.

He lost no time, but the very next day, attended by one servant, who he knew to be an adroit fellow, posted down to Canterbury, within a quarter of a mile of which city was the house where Aristella at present resided.

Having no acquaintance in that part of the country, he took up his lodging in one of the best Inns, where pretending that it was mere curiosity to see that ancient city, and the fine tombs in the Cathedral, that had brought him thither, several of the neighbouring gentry, as well as townsmen, assured him they should be proud of the honour of accompanying him to all those places which most deserved the attention of a traveller.

Among the number of these hospitable persons, was the brother-in-law of Aristella : — it is easy to suppose that Mutantius made use of all the arts he was master of to insinuate himself into the good graces of a person whose acquaintance was so necessary to his design ; and indeed, had not this accident happened, there seemed little probability of his accomplishing them ; for Aristella kept so close in the house with her sister, that tho' he had been four days at Canterbury, and
taken

taken all imaginable pains to get a glimpse of her, he never yet had been so happy.

Mutantius had something in him no less engaging to the men than enchanting to the women ; — he knows how to suit himself to the humour of every one he converses with ; — it was therefore not difficult for him to cultivate a friendship with a plain country gentleman, who, free from all guile, was equally free from all distrust.

Beechly, for so he was call'd, had no other fault than loving his bottle a little too well, which Mutantius perceiving, fell in with this foible, and thereby gained his whole heart, — as I remember to have read in a very old treatise, entitled, *De Arte Mundi*:

- ‘ Who would the favour of a patron
‘ win,
- ‘ With flattering his vices must begin.’

Or, as another Author of a more modern date tells us :

- ‘ Whate’er we do, we would have
‘ others do ;
- ‘ Proud to be teachers and examples
‘ too.’

But I beg pardon of my reader for detaining his attention with useless quotations to prove what every one is sufficiently convinced of within himself ; and shall now proceed with the thread of my narrative.

These two gentlemen were drinking together very late, — Mutantius had ply'd the other so fast with glasses, that he became more than ordinarily intoxicated ; — our lover obliged him to suffer himself to be attended home by his footman, and the next morning sent a polite message to enquire of his health ; — Beechly took this so kindly, that he came immediately after to the lodgings of Mutantius, to shew that he was well, and to desire he would do him the honour of dining with him that day.

My wife, said he, is in the straw ; but she has a sister who is at present with us, — a good smart well-behaved girl, and will receive you in the best manner she is able.

It is not to be doubted but that the heart of Mutantius flutter'd with the most rapturous sensation, on hearing himself invited to come to a place where he was
sure

sure of enjoying the company of that fair creature he so much languish'd to behold, and had taken so much pains to pursue.

It is needless to say that he readily accepted so obliging a summons, nor that he rather anticipated than prolong'd the appointed hour of complying with it ; — he was met by Beechly at the gate with all imaginable demonstrations of a sincere welcome, and conducted into the parlour, where Aristella, who soon after enter'd, was presented to him.

Whatever emotions Mutantius might feel in approaching to salute her, they were yet inferior to her's in the first surprise of seeing him there ; — she had heard her brother Beechly talk of a fine gentleman lately come to Canterbury, and had that morning received orders from him to prepare a handsome dinner for his entertainment ; but as she had not heard him mention the name of this new friend, and had no curiosity to ask any thing concerning him, could little expect he was the same she had seen at her other sister's in London.

She had, it seems, from the first interview with him, been possess'd of sentiments in his favour, which, if not

altogether so passionate as those she inspired him with, were yet no less soft and tender; but conscious of the vast disparity between their fortunes, she had endeavour'd to check the growth of an inclination, which she thought could only be destructive of her peace, and if ever discover'd, render her ridiculous to the world.

But on this second, and unexpected meeting him again, the stifled wishes of her soul burst out afresh, — a sudden flow of joy rush'd o'er her heart, which, join'd to the surprise she was in, spread a kind of wild, tho' agreeable confusion in her eyes and voice, while she made him those compliments which civility exacted from her to a stranger.

Mutantius, to whose penetrating eyes the change in her countenance was very visible, look'd on it as a happy presage of the success of his design; and the secret pleasure this imagination gave him brighten'd all his air, and added new graces to every thing he said or did, so that poor Aristella became now quite lost in love and admiration.

This day proved, indeed, extremely fortunate to Mutantius; — dinner was no sooner

sooner over than Beechly was call'd out to a person who waited to speak with him on some business in another room;—the lover took this opportunity of declaring his passion to his mistress, and relating to her the pains he had taken to get a sight of her; and the answers she made, tho' very modest and discreet, were such as gave him no reason to despair.

Beechly returning broke off their conversation, — he took Mutantius to shew him his gardens, which, tho' not ornamented with statues nor any exotic curiosities, were very pleasant and large;—Mutantius was lavish in his praises on every thing he saw; but above all, his fancy seem'd taken with a long grass walk, and a close arbour at the end of it; — ‘ If I had such a walk as this in town, said he, I should never trouble the Mall, Vaux-Hall, nor Ranelagh.’

‘ Since you cannot carry this with you, reply'd Beechly, you shall be extremely welcome to make as much use of it as you think fit while you stay in this part of the world.’

Mutantius thank'd him; but said he was an early riser, and should chuse such a walk chiefly for the sake of meditation

in a morning, and that to come at such hours might give too much trouble to the servants.

‘ I can easily remedy that difficulty, since you make it one, answer’d the other ; there is a door that opens behind the arbour into a little field where I keep a cow ; — I seldom have occasion to make use of the key, and it is at your service, — so you may come in as early or as late as you please, without disturbing any of my family, or being disturbed by them.’

The lover made a thousand acknowledgments to him for this favour, and received the key, which, in his mind, he look’d upon as a sure passport to all the happiness he wish’d at present to enjoy.

He went the very next morning, taking a book in his hand, to prevent suspicion in case he should be seen, tho’ there was no great danger of that, as Beechly kept but two maids and one man servant, who, it might be supposed, had too much business in a morning to ramble in the gardens ; but he might reasonably hope to meet with Aristella, who having nothing to employ her time, might probably
amuse

amuse some part of it in that agreeable place.

It is likely, however, he might have been disappointed for many days together, if fortune had not now befriended him, as she had hitherto done during the course of this adventure.

Aristella was there, indeed, before him, in the same walk, and very near the arbour through which he enter'd ; — she had come thither to gather Cinquefoil for her sister, the nurse who attended her being apprehensive of her falling into a fevourish disorder.

'Tis likely she was little less surpris'd on seeing him in that place, than she had been when introduced to her by her brother ; — but as I was not present, and have this part of the story from the report of others, can relate nothing of the particulars of their discourse, and only say in general, that he spar'd no vows nor protestations to convince her of his passion, and that he prevail'd on her to return to him again, after having carry'd in the herbs.

His entreaties, join'd to her own secret inclinations, engag'd her to see him the

next day ; — this meeting was succeeded by another, that by a third, and so on for several mornings together, — every one of them still more endearing him to her affections; but, in spite of the pleasure she took in his addresses, she could not keep herself from some doubt of the sincerity of his passion, whenever she reflected on the inequality of their fortunes : — one day, expressing herself very emphatically on that occasion, he cry'd out, — ‘ Talk not of fortune, — by Heaven ‘ your heart is all I wish !’ — this he repeated so often, and so tenderly, that she at last confess'd, — it was already his.

Having brought her to this point, he now thought it proper to let her know the real aim of all his courtship ; — he began with telling her, that beauty, such as hers, merited to be set off with all the advantages of dress and grandeur ; — that she had wasted too much of her youth on a mean dependance on her kindred ; and concluded with the offer of a large settlement, protesting to her at the same time, that he would never marry any other woman, and that she should live in every thing like his wife except the name.

If a dagger had pierced the gentle breast of Aristella, it could not have
given

given her more pain than did this cruel declaration ; — for some moments she was unable to make any reply, but burst into a flood of tears, and discovered all the symptoms of the most violent grief ; — he endeavour'd to calm this tempest in her mind, by all the arts that love and wit could inspire ; — but all was now in vain, — a virtuous pride, by degrees, got the better of her sorrows, and starting from him, she cry'd out, — ‘ Deceitful and un-
‘ generous man ! — but think not that
‘ your base desires shall triumph over the
‘ weakness I have confess'd for you ; —
‘ no, — I will never see you more, nor
‘ henceforth think of you but with horror
‘ and detestation.’

In speaking these words she flew out of the arbour ; — rage gave wings to her feet, yet Mutantius would certainly have overtaken her, if the sight of a man, whom Beechly had employ'd to do some work in the garden, had not made him turn back.

He went to his lodgings much disconcerted at this accident, but the knowledge he had of Aristella's affection for him kept him from totally despairing ; — he repair'd to the dear arbour the next morning, but no Aristella appear'd ; — he went again, but had no better success ;

— resolved to see her, if possible, he made a visit at the house, and told Beechly in a free manner, that he was come to take a second dinner with him, to which he reply'd with a compliment suitable to the occasion.

Mutantius was again disappointed, — Aristella hearing he was there, sent word to her brother that she had a violent tooth-ach, and desired he would excuse her from coming down; — this drove the lover almost to distraction, — he went home, — wrote to her, and made his footman go, as of his own accord, to chat with the servants, and loyter about the house 'till he should see Aristella and deliver the letter to her.

The fellow found means to execute his commission, — Aristella took the letter on his presenting it to her, and went up into her chamber; but after reflecting a little, would not trust her own heart so far as to read this dangerous epistle, following the Poet's advice.

' The nymph who hears, inclines to sin;
' Who parlies half gives up the town,
' And rav'nous love soon enters in
' When once the out-work's beaten
' down.'

She

She therefore put it under a cover, and having sealed and directed it, came down and gave it to the man, saying, —
‘ There’s my answer to your master’s letter.’

Never had the vanity of Mutantius met with so severe a shock, yet could he not forbear revering the virtue he attempted to destroy ; — if before he lov’d, he now ador’d her ; and the more he consider’d her perfections, the more he found her worthy to be his wife ; — yet, when he thought of marriage, the idea of that state was irksome to him : — he knew that at present he was the idol of the fair, but should cease to be so if once he became a husband : — in fine, he could not bear to lose his darling admiration, yet was equally unable to bear life without the enjoyment of Aristella.

After some debate within himself, his passion, however, got the better of his vanity, and he resolved to marry Aristella ; but which way to let her know he meant to do so, seem’d as great a difficulty as any he had pass’d through in attempting to seduce her : — he was convinced she would neither see him nor receive a letter from him, yet, in spite of all this, love fertile
in

in contrivances, put a stratagem into his head, which had the desired effect; — it was this :

Beechly's new-born son had not been yet baptiz'd, on account of the mother's having been more than ordinarily indisposed during her lying-in; — he offered himself to be one of the sponsors at the font, which the other gladly accepted, having already troubled many of his friends on the like occasion : — Aristella could not now avoid his presence, but behaved with so much reserve, scarce ever looking towards him, that a man less conscious of his own merit might have been abash'd. — After some time, when most of the company were engaged in conversation, he found an opportunity to say to her, — ‘ Madam, I beseech you will forgive the rash proposal I presum'd to make you ; — be assur'd I have heartily repented of it, and have now no designs upon you but what are truly honourable ; ’ — to which she reply'd, — ‘ Sir, I shall never believe a man means me well who has once thought so poorly of me. ’ — ‘ I only beg, resumed he, the liberty of entertaining you once more in private, and if what I have then to say does not merit your pardon and your favour I shall leave Canterbury, and
‘ perhaps

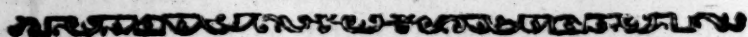
‘ perhaps the world, for ever.’—He could add no more at that time,—Beechly call’d to him to pledge him in a bumper to the young Christian ; but before they parted he found means to enforce what he had last said, and spoke with so moving an air that she consented to see him the next morning.

The consequence of this interview was a full forgiveness for what was past on the side of Aristella, and on that of Mutantius a solemn vow of making her his wife the moment she consented to be so ; but added, that there were some circumstances in his affairs which required their marriage should be kept secret for a time : — to this last article she made no direct answer at present, but the next day, when they met again by appointment, suffer’d herself to be overcome by his persuasions, and promised that every thing should be as he would have it.

In fine, it was at last agreed between them that he should return to London in a few days, and that she should follow as soon as her sister’s recovery permitted her to take her leave with decency.

Both these lovers were now in a state of perfect contentment, and each of them observed

observed the promise given to the other with the utmost punctuality ; — but what afterwards befel them must be the subject of another Chapter.



C H A P. IX.

Contains only a continuation of the same narrative, begun in the foregoing Chapter, and will not be concluded in this.

Mutantius having been appris'd, by a letter from Aristella, of the day in which she should come to town, went in his own coach as far as Greenwich to meet her, and conducted her to a very handsome and well furnish'd lodging, in one of the most airy and best streets near Bloomsbury-Square, where he had also provided a footman and maid-servant to attend her.

She was at first a little scrupulous of putting herself under his protection, till the sacred ceremony should have united her to him for ever : — he perceived the apprehensions she was under, and immediately relieved them by renewing his protestations, that the next morning should make his person as inviolably her's as his heart had been from the first moment he beheld

beheld her, and at the same time shew'd her a ring and marriage licence, which he had already prepar'd for that purpose.

He supped with her that evening, but when it was over very respectfully retir'd, to leave her to that repose which he judg'd necessary after the fatigue of her journey.

I come now to that part of the story which I had an opportunity of being both an eye and ear witness of: — I was acquainted with the gentlewoman of the house where Aristella was placed, and happen'd to call there on some business the very next morning after that young beauty had been brought thither.

My friend told me, among other discourse, that she had lett her lodgings at a very high rent; but was a little apprehensive that the person they were for was no better than a kept woman: — on my asking what ground she had for such a suspicion, she reply'd, — that she had lett her lodgings to a gentleman of fortune, call'd Mutantius, for the use of a lady whom he brought to take possession of them the night before, and that he had also hired servants to wait upon her, who she found knew as little of the person they were to serve as she did.

She

She farther added, that the lady was extremely young, the most beautiful creature she ever saw in her life ; — and that she could not help thinking it a little odd, that such a one should be under the care of so gay and airy a spark as Mutantius.

As I was perfectly acquainted with the character of Mutantius, I was a good deal of opinion that she was in the right ; — I advised her, however, to say nothing till she should see farther into the matter, and not lose so beneficial a lodger on a bare conjecture.

She approv'd of what I said, and I took my leave, but not to go home, — what she had told me fill'd me with a curiosity to discover something more of this affair, so went no farther than the first blind alley I found, where I put on my Invisible Belt, and returned again just as Mutantius knock'd at the door, — I enter'd with him and follow'd him up stairs ; — the sight of Aristella convinced me that the good woman had not been mistaken in the description she gave me of her ; — the lovers ran into each other's arms, and Mutantius looking on her with the greatest tenderness spoke thus :

Mutantius.

Mutantius. ‘ Now, my dearest Aristella, I am come to put a final end to all your doubts either of my love or honour.’

Aristella. ‘ I am pleased to think that the perfect confidence I have shewn in both gives me some sort of claim to the proof you are now about to give of them, since I must confess myself in every other respect so unworthy of you.’

Mutantius. ‘ You are worthy of every thing; — but, my dear, you forget that there is another testimony that I expect from you of the regard you have for me.’

Aristella. ‘ Name it, that my ready compliance may convince you how happy I think myself in every opportunity of obliging you.’

Mutantius. ‘ It is that you will be content that for some time our marriage may be kept a secret.’

Aristella. ‘ You know I have already promis’d it.’

Mu-

Mutantius. ‘ Yes,—in general terms ;
‘ — but you have sisters who are very
‘ dear to you, and tho’ I doubt not of
‘ their discretion, I cannot think a secret
‘ safe when trusted in so many hands : —
‘ Will then your love for me enable you
‘ to endure their reproaches for your sup-
‘ posed dishonour, rather than reveal
‘ what is inconvenient for me to be made
‘ known ?’

Aristella. ‘ The trial is a little severe,
‘ but will not last for ever.’

Mutantius. ‘ No, my dear, a time
‘ will come when your innocence shall be
‘ fully clear’d, and like the sun, shine
‘ brighter after this short eclipse ; — till
‘ then, may I depend that the name of
‘ wife and husband shall be known only
‘ between ourselves ?’

Aristella. ‘ You may.’

Mutantius. ‘ Swear it then.’

Aristella. ‘ By all that’s sacred.’

Mutantius. ‘ Hold, my dear ; — I
‘ would have you first understand the full
‘ extent

‘ extent of the vow you are about to
‘ make; — you swear that no imaginary
‘ provocation on my side, nor no unjust
‘ contempt nor ill treatment you may
‘ meet with from the world, shall ever
‘ extort from you a confession that you
‘ are my wife, till I myself shall publicly
‘ acknowledge you to be so.’

Aristella. ‘ All this I solemnly swear,
‘ and invoke Heaven to bless me as I
‘ shall religiously observe it.’

Mutantius. ‘ Charming, generous
‘ creature, and in return, to prevent
‘ all future apprehensions in prejudice
‘ of my faith or constancy from rising
‘ in your gentle breast, if it were
‘ possible for me to take a base advantage
‘ of the obligation I have laid you under,
‘ and make my addresses to another wo-
‘ man on the score of marriage, I here
‘ release you from your vow, and leave
‘ you at liberty to declare yourself my
‘ wife, assert your prior right, and pro-
‘ claim me for a villain.’

Aristella ‘ Heaven forbid it should
‘ ever come to that.

Mutantiu. ‘ No, my Aristella, —
‘ there is no danger, I have already re-
‘ jected

‘ jected greater offers than ever can be
‘ made to me again : — to deal sincerely
‘ with you, — there has been always in
‘ my nature an extreme repugnancy to
‘ the name of marriage ; the name of
‘ husband was irksome to me ; — no wo-
‘ man but yourself had ever charms to
‘ reconcile me to it ; but your beauty,
‘ your sweetness, your unaffected modesty,
‘ have now inform’d my soul, and by de-
‘ grees will make me as proud of Hy-
‘ men’s fetters as I should once have been
‘ ashamed of them.’

Aristella. ‘ It shall be my whole study
‘ to make them easy to you.’

Mutantius. ‘ I know it will ; — but
‘ come, my love, — a coach waits to car-
‘ ry us to church, — that solemn scene
‘ which fixes the everlasting happiness or
‘ misery of all who approach it in the
‘ manner we do.’

On concluding these words he took her by the hand and led her down stairs, — I was close behind them when they went into the coach, which was order’d to drive to Clerkenwell ; — I presently suppos’d he made choice of this place as there was the least danger of his being seen by any one who knew him-

I fol-

I follow'd on foot, but came time enough to the church to see Mutantius resign that liberty he had once set so high a value on as to resolve never to part with; — the ceremony of marriage was performed by the curate of the parish, and the clerk officiated as father to give away the bride; — after all was over, Mutantius desier'd their marriage might be register'd, and a certificate of it given to Aristella; — both which were accordingly done.

I now left the new wedded pair to dispose of themselves as they thought fit, and return'd to my apartment in order to ruminate at leisure on an adventure which seem'd to me to have in it many inconsistencies.

To find that Mutantius, after having refused some of the best fortunes and most lovely women in the kingdom, should give his hand to a girl like Aristella, who tho' possess'd of every amiable qualification of the mind, was yet as inferior in beauty as in the goods of fortune; this, I say, afforded much matter of astonishment to me, yet the injunction he had laid her under of keeping their marriage a secret appear'd

pear'd to me a still greater subject for speculation.

At first I fear'd he did not mean her fair ; but when the care he took to have their marriage register'd, and a certificate of it to be deliver'd to her, contradicted that opinion, and I began to think, that as fancy is more prevalent than judgment in the affairs of love, he really thought her worthy of being his wife, and would one day publicly acknowledge her to be such, tho' at present the tenderness he had for her was not strong enough to overcome the vanity of being admir'd by others, which he thought would cease, and he should pass unregarded by the rest of the fair sex, when he should be known to have attach'd himself to one by marriage.

The more I thought on this adventure, the more I was confounded ; and the result of all my meditations was, that it must be left to time to unravel the mystery ; — I kept, however, a watchful eye on the behaviour of Mutantius, but was little the wiser for the pains I took, as I found he lived in the same gay and gallant manner he had always done in respect to the ladies.

It was about a month, as near as I can remember, after his marriage with Aristella, that a young beauty, call'd Elutheria, appear'd in town; — the late death of her father had left her mistress of a very large fortune, and with it, what perhaps was not less pleasing to her, the full enjoyment of that liberty, which, during his life, had been much restrain'd.

A new face, without the addition of any extraordinary beauty, is of itself sufficient to draw after it a train of admirers; but Elutheria had charms, which, join'd to those of novelty, made it not strange that she should soon become the general toast.

The first time Mutantius saw her was at the Playhouse; — he was there with Apamia, — she happen'd to be seated, with two other ladies, in a box just opposite to them; but not knowing who she was, had perhaps taken no notice of her, if Apamia had not indiscreetly mention'd her to him; — I was sitting behind them, and heard this little following dialogue:

Apamia. ' Do you see Elutheria yonder?'

Mutantius. ‘What! she that makes so great a noise in town? — Pray, madam, which is she?’

Apamia. ‘She in mourning just over-against us. — I find her beauty has but little effect on you, that you did not observe her before.’

Mutantius. ‘I was too much taken up with what I have more near, madam.’

Apamia. ‘Nay, for my part, I can see nothing extraordinary in her; — then she is the most insipid creature in the world; — I have been in her company, and she has not a word to say for herself.’

Mutantius. ‘Well, I wonder any man can be charm’d with a woman that has not wit; — one may as well fall in love with a fine picture as with a fine woman without a tongue; but where wit and beauty are united, as in the divine Apamia, all hearts must yield.’

Apamia. ‘You flatter me, Mutantius.’

Mutantius. ‘No, by Heaven! — you are in reality what the poet says of Corrinna.’

‘All

‘ All that desire can wish, or fancy form.’

All the answer she gave to this was a look full of languishment, accompany’d with a little pat on his shoulder with her fan, and then turn’d from him to observe what was doing on the stage ; — but in spite of the fine things he had been saying to her, I easily distinguish’d, from the first mention of Elutheria’s name, a certain restlessness in him for a more full view of that celebrated beauty.

He had never been practis’d in the virtue of self-denial, and was not of a humour to put any check on his inclinations, of what kind soever they were ; — he soon after made an excuse to Apamia for leaving her a few minutes, telling her he saw a gentleman on the other side of the house whom he must needs speak with.

The person with whom he pretended to have business was seated at the very end of one of the benches in the pit, just under Elutheria’s box, so that he could not have thought on a more commodious situation for the gratification of his curiosity.

The play acted that night afforded me little matter of entertainment, and I left it at the beginning of the fourth act : — as I was passing behind the boxes, to go out of the house, I met Mutantius returning to Apamia, but first heard him give directions to one of the orange-women to carry a paper of sweetmeats to the lady in mourning, the next box but one to the stage, with the compliments of a gentleman unknown.

This incident, join'd to some others I had been witness of, made me pity poor Aristella, who tho' married infinitely beyond her hopes in point of fortune, and to one she passionately loved, could not be expected to enjoy a lasting or sincere happiness with a man of so vain, so volatile, and so uncertain a disposition.

A very little time afterwards convinc'd me that Mutantius was not the less general lover for being a husband, — he met Elutheria at the route of a lady of his acquaintance ; — she appear'd more lovely to him at this second sight even than at the first, and the sprightliness of her humour gave a double lustre to the graces of her person ; — she has, indeed, charms which might inspire the most tender emotions

tions in the heart of any man, — that of Mutantius could not but confess their force, and the liking he had for her, join'd to the ambition of being first in the esteem of a woman who was at present the first in the esteem of most men, made him omit nothing that might conduce to the gratification of that darling passion.

His fine person, — his flowing wit, — his engaging manner of address, had made many conquests without designing it; but here, — where he exerted all his rhetoric, — call'd the dying Cupids to his eyes, and seem'd to breathe nothing but love and soft desire, it is not to be wonder'd at that he stole upon the mind of a young maid, altogether unprepar'd for so dangerous a rencounter.

In fine, she lov'd him, — lov'd and admir'd him to that infatuated degree, that she was proud of doing so, — glory'd in the chains of her too amiable vanquisher, and attempted not to conceal them.'

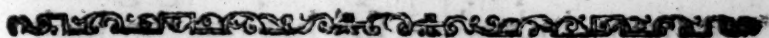
Apamia, who for some months had thought herself the supreme sovereign of his heart, was almost distracted on finding she had so powerful a competitor; — all the inconstancy of Mutantius could not

render him less dear to her ; — but the charms of her for whose sake she thought herself neglected became so odious in her eyes, that she spar'd nothing which female wit and malice could suggest to blacken her character, and make her appear contemptible to the world.

The ungarded conduct of Elutheria, assisting the envy of her rival, this late celebrated beauty became as much despis'd as she had been once ador'd ; but all absorb'd in love and its fallacious joys, she felt not the weight of her misfortune, because she saw it not, 'till Mutantius himself had gain'd his point, and shew'd the world he had bore away the prize so many in vain had aim'd at, open'd her deluded eyes by treating her with a cold indifference and palpable neglect.

But now, — methinks I hear the reader cry out with some impatience, — ‘ How did Aristella behave all this time ? How could she, the lawful wife of this inconstant man, support the share that others had in his affections ? ’ — It is, indeed, impossible for me to say in what manner she would have resented so provoking a circumstance if known to her ; but she liv'd too retir'd for this misfortune to reach her ears ; — she had, however,
other

other troubles more than sufficient for human fortitude to sustain, but of what nature they were must be left to the next chapter to explain.



C H A P. X.

The catastrophe of this adventure cannot fail of exciting compassion in the breasts of my fair readers, and also afford much matter of speculation to those of the other sex.

THE pursuit of other adventures, which shall be inserted in their proper places before the conclusion of this work, hinder'd me for a long time from going to see in what manner Aristella was treated by Mutantius; but at length, some uneasy reflexions on her account raised an impatience in me to know the certainty of her present state.

Accordingly I went one day to the house where she was lodg'd; but, to my great surprise, found she had made but a short stay there, and had been removed a considerable time before my coming:—on my asking some questions of my friend

concerning the reason of it, the good woman answer'd me in these or the like terms :

‘ The affair was just as I expected, said she ; I pity the poor young gentlewoman, indeed, — she has not the looks of such a one ; — but I suppose she has been decoy’d by abundance of fair promises : — I wonder, however, that Mutantius, knowing the character of my house, and that I always had people of the best fashion lodge with me, should offer to bring a kept-mistress under my roof ; but I was very free with him, — I told him my mind very plainly on the occasion.’

‘ And pray what answer did he make, cry’d I, with some impatience, — when you call’d her a kept-mistress ?’

‘ Very little to the purpose, truly, resum’d she ; he only said that she was a gentlewoman, and a friend of his, and as such expected I should treat her civilly ; — I told him it was not in my nature to treat any body uncivilly, but that I would encourage no such doings, and therefore desir’d he would provide another lodging for her ; — on this he flew into a passion, — told me I was an
‘ igno-

‘ ignorant foolish woman, and the like ;
‘ — but I did not regard his bouncing,
‘ and as he found I was resolute, took
‘ his madam away in a few days after-
‘ wards.’

The manner in which this woman spoke made me extremely commiserate the condition of poor Aristella, who, though a lawful wife, was obliged, through the caprice of Mutantius, and the vow she had taken, to endure all the contumely due to a prostitute.

I would have given almost any thing, but the secret of my Invisible Belt and Tablets to have clear’d Aristella’s innocence in the fullest manner to this scrupulous gentlewoman ; but as there was no doing the one without the other, I was compell’d to content myself with getting out of her directions to the place where this much injur’d beauty was removed, resolving to take the first opportunity to see what attonement the behaviour of Mutantius made to her in private, for the injustice he did her reputation in public.

I was so lucky as to find them together the first day I went ; but the scene I was witness of, instead of diminishing,

very much added to the concern I had carry'd with me, as every good-natur'd reader, on my reciting it, will believe.

Aristella was sitting very melancholy in one corner of the room, — Mutantius in another, with all the marks of discontent and ill-humour in his countenance ; — by what follow'd, it appears that she had been speaking somewhat to him in relation to the discovery of their marriage ; — I doubt not, by what I saw of her behaviour both before and afterwards, that she express'd herself in very gentle terms on the occasion ; but the bare mention of such a thing, to a man of his present way of thinking, was of itself a sufficient offence.

I have already describ'd the posture I found him in ; but just as I enter'd the room he reply'd to what she had said, and that reply drew on a conversation which let me into the whole of both their sentiments.

Mutantius. ' I am sorry to find you
' have so little regard for me ; and, in-
' deed, so little prudence, as whenever I
' am with you to fall eternally upon a
' subject which you know is so disagree-
' able to me.'

Aristella.

Aristella. ‘ If you lov’d me half so well as you once pretended, it would not be so disagreeable; — and you would, at least, acquaint me with the reasons which oblige me to live in the manner I do.’

Mutantius. ‘ Perhaps it is not proper for me to reveal them.’

Aristella. ‘ Oh, Mutantius! — I know not what to think of my condition. — Why did you marry me?’

Mutantius. ‘ Because I then liked you better than any other woman, and if I do not still continue to do so it is your own fault; — I hate to be teaz’d: — besides, the conditions of our marriage were that it should be kept a secret.’

Aristella. ‘ Yes, — for a time.’

Mutantius. ‘ That time will not be shorten’d by your impatience.’

Aristella. ‘ It may, — for if it last much longer my heart infallibly must break.’

Mutantius. ‘ Pish, — women’s hearts
‘ are not of such brittle stuff; — the head
‘ is in more danger, when swell’d with
‘ senseless pride and vanity.’

Aristella. ‘ Indeed, sir, I think it
‘ would at least become you to be a little
‘ more serious on the occasion.’

Mutantius. ‘ With all my heart, ma-
‘ dam, — as serious as you please; —
‘ for faith I am not in a humour to be
‘ very merry: — seriously then, you
‘ seem to me to be one of the most un-
‘ grateful, and most unreasonable wo-
‘ men under the sun.—Have I not taken
‘ you from a mean dependance on your
‘ sisters, who I believe could but ill spare
‘ the scanty helps you received from
‘ them? — Have you not now good
‘ lodgings, servants to wait on you, and
‘ an allowance sufficient to support you in
‘ a fashion beyond what you could ever
‘ have expected? — yet all this is no-
‘ thing in your account.’

Aristella. ‘ Nothing, when balanced
‘ against a life of infamy: — the very
‘ servants you upbraid me with despise
‘ me while they serve me; — the people
‘ of the house treat me but with an en-
‘ forced

‘ forced civility ; — I pass my days as
‘ one who was an alien to the world, and
‘ had no business in it ; — never partake
‘ the joys of social conversation, — never
‘ visit, nor am visited, and scarce dare
‘ venture to breathe the freshness of the
‘ open air, lest I should be seen by any
‘ who have known me, especially by my
‘ sisters, who, mean as you think of
‘ them, know how to set a just value
‘ upon reputation, and to scorn all the
‘ riches of the earth without it.

Mutantius. ‘ A very fine catalogue
‘ of complaints, truly. — Have you any
‘ more to add ?’

Aristella. ‘ Yes, — one thing more,
‘ which, with what indifference soever
‘ you may now regard me, ought not,
‘ methinks, to escape your consideration ;
‘ — you know I am far advanced in my
‘ pregnancy ; — perhaps too of a son ;
‘ and can you support the thoughts, that
‘ an infant, born the lawful heir of your
‘ estate and name, shall be saluted, on
‘ his first seeing light, with the odious
‘ title of spurious offspring, — a bastard ?

Mutantius. ‘ What will he be the
‘ worse, — unless you expect to have so
‘ wise a child as to know what is said
‘ of

‘ of him as soon as he comes into the
‘ world?’

Aristella. ‘ Oh, Mutantius! — Mu-
‘ tantius! — this is cruel dealing.’

She said no more, but wept bitterly ;
— Mutantius, who it must be own’d has
some good-nature, seem’d much mov’d at
seeing her thus, and having look’d on
her some moments with a great deal of
tendernefs, bid her come to him ; — she
obey’d, but advanced with the most for-
rowful and dejected air ; — he pull’d her
to him, — made her sit upon his knee,
and kissing away the tears which abun-
dantly stream’d from her lovely eyes
down even to her bosom, he spoke thus :

Mutantius. ‘ Come, my poor Ari-
‘ stella, do not be so foolish, — you have
‘ no cause for weeping, — you know
‘ yourself virtuous, — and I know you
‘ are so, — and have no need to be af-
‘ flicted at the mistaken opinion others
‘ may have of you, — especially as it is
‘ not to last always.’

Aristella. ‘ If I were certain when this
‘ event would happen, even though it
‘ were much longer than I hope it will,
‘ I should with patience wait.’

Mutan-

Mutantius. ‘ You must depend for
‘ that upon my love and honour ; — it is
‘ not in my power to assign the very day
‘ and hour : — to deal sincerely with you,
‘ — I have been a railer at marriage, —
‘ have refus’d offers of that nature as
‘ much above my expectations as I was
‘ above your’s, — and I cannot all at
‘ once submit to be pointed at for a hus-
‘ band, and hear people laugh and cry
‘ out, — that I had thrown myself away ;
‘ but this, my dear, you may assure your-
‘ self, that I will endeavour to get rid of
‘ these scruples as soon as possible ; — in
‘ the mean time, I will give you as much
‘ of my company as can be spar’d from
‘ business and other attachments which
‘ are not to be dispenced with ; — I
‘ came on purpose to devote this whole
‘ day to you, drive me not from you by
‘ your discontent ; — kiss me, and give
‘ me your promise that you will be entire-
‘ ly easy.’

She comply’d readily with the first part
of this injunction, and said she would do
the best to perform the other ; — with
this he seem’d highly satisfy’d, and bid her
ring the bell for a servant to go and order
a dinner to be prepar’d for them at an ad-
jacent tavern and sent home ; — just as
she

she was about to do as he desir'd, her maid came running into the room and told him that one of his footmen was below, and said he had something of the utmost consequence to deliver to him ; — Mutantius, on hearing this, went to the top of the stair-case and call'd the fellow up, who presented him with a letter, saying at the same time,

Footman. ‘ From Apamia, sir, —
 ‘ her footman was so pressing to have it
 ‘ deliver'd to your honour, that I promis'd I would endeavour to find you,
 ‘ and bring her ladyship an answer.’

Mutantius. ‘ You did well.’

I stood close behind him while he open'd the letter, and saw it contain'd these lines :

TO MUTANTIUS.

“ Dear Agreeable,

“ **T**HIS subpoena demands your presence at a court of Belles and
 “ Beaux, to be held in my drawing-room this evening at six precisely ; —
 “ fail not to come on penalty of forfeiting your character of politeness,
 “ nor leave behind you any of those talents

“ lents which will serve to render the
“ sacrifice we propose to mirth and
“ gayety complete ;—you know yourself
“ the life and soul of conversation; your
“ absence, therefore, at this time, would
“ be unpardonable : — if your watch
“ should happen to go too fast, or any
“ other accident make you anticipate the
“ appointed hour, and you come before
“ the rest of the company, you need not
“ apprehend being turn’d back, by

“ Yours, &c. &c.

“ APAMIA.”

Having read this little billet, he bid his man fly to Apamia and carry her his compliments, with an assurance that he would do himself the honour to be punctual in obeying her commands ; — then turn’d into the room and said to Aristella,

Mutantius. ‘ I am sorry, my dear, I
‘ cannot stay with you as I promised ; —
‘ some friends desire my company this
‘ afternoon, and I cannot possibly excuse
‘ myself from complying with their re-
‘ quest.’

Aristella. ‘ You will dine with me,
‘ however?’

Mutan-

Mutantius. ‘ It will be utterly inconvenient for me to do so; — it is now near two o’clock, — I am to meet the company at five, and must new dress; so you will excuse me.’

Aristella. ‘ When may I hope to see you again?’

Mutantius. ‘ To-morrow, perhaps, — or next day, — I cannot say exactly when; but I will come soon. — Farewel, — make yourself easy.’

In speaking these last words he gave her a slight salute, and went down stairs carelessly humming part of an Italian air, leaving his turtle to moan the absence of her inconstant mate.

By what I had now seen of the behaviour and disposition of *Mutantius*, I found reason to believe it would be yet a great while before he would bring himself to make a declaration of his marriage, so resolved not to take the trouble of any farther inquiries, but wait till common fame should give me intelligence of it.

This

This event, however, happen'd much sooner than I expected ; but was brought about by an accident which excited the extremest pity instead of congratulations ; — the unfortunate Aristella was not born to enjoy a happiness she so ardently had wish'd for, and so long been made to hope ; — death alone had the power to give what life in vain had waited for ; and the same breath which told me Mutantius had acknowledged her for his wife, inform'd me also that she was no more.

Aristella, on her leaving the country, was charg'd with letters and some little presents from mrs. Beechly to her two sisters in London ; but being hinder'd from executing this commission in person, by the obligation Mutantius had laid her under, she sent what was entrusted to her care by a porter, accompany'd with a little billet from herself ; in which she told them, — that an affair of the utmost consequence kept her at present from seeing them, but that she hoped to do so in a short time, and would then acquaint them with the reasons for having absented herself, and begg'd they would entertain no unfavourable thoughts of her conduct in this point.

As

As she was circumstanced, it was not in her power to have acted otherwise than she did ; yet what satisfaction could such a letter as this give to the two sisters ? — for a girl, so young and beautiful as she was, to banish herself from her kindred, without acquainting them with the motive of her doing so, or the place to which she was retir'd, had a right to raise in them conjectures of the very worst sort : — they were almost distracted at the thoughts of her supposed ruin, and spar'd no pains to find her out, in order to bring her home, and snatch her from the shame they imagin'd she was involved in.

Fruitless was their search for a long time ; but chance, at length, discover'd to them not only where she lived, but also that she was supported by a gentleman ; and, in fine, that she was look'd upon as a kept-mistress : — quite transported with grief and rage, they went to the house where she was lodg'd, and the door happening to be open, flew up stairs without any ceremony and burst in upon her ; — the sight of her, for her pregnancy was very visible, added to the passions they were before inflam'd with ; — they reproach'd, — they revil'd her in the most bitter terms, while poor Aristella,
bound

bound by the fatal oath she had taken, could say nothing in defence of her innocence, but what served to convince them more fully of her guilt

After having loaded her with opprobrious names, and railed themselves quite out of breath, they left her with the same precipitation they had come, vowing never more to see or think of her as a sister.

Impossible is it for any one to conceive what the soul of Aristella suffer'd in this shocking stroke, — conscious of innocence, yet labouring under all the appearance of guilt ; — scandaliz'd, abus'd by those to whom she had been so dear, yet incapable either of defending her wrong'd virtue, or of blaming the severity she was treated with for her suppos'd fall ; — every passion that can agitate the human heart at once assail'd, and overwhelm'd her with a variety of anguish ; the force of which had such an effect upon her as to cause an abortion that same night, and also to throw her into convulsions, which in a few hours render'd her life despair'd of by all about her.

In her intervals, between those fits which depriv'd her of all sense and motion, she

she cry'd out for Mutantius, — ask'd where he was, and said she could not die without seeing him ; — messengers were immediately dispatch'd to him with this dreadful message ; — he came on hearing it, — he seem'd greatly affected at the condition he found her in, but was much more so when he was informed by her maid what it was had thrown her into it ; — she was insensible on his entrance, but recovering soon after, and seeing him so near her, catch'd hold of his hand, and with agonies inexpressible, said to him, — ‘ Oh ! Mutantius, you now will be rid of a tie you have been asham'd to own.’ — ‘ No, by Heaven ! cry'd he, Live, live, Aristella, and I will declare to all the world that you are my wife, — my lawful married wife.’

Whether it were this sudden rush of joy, on hearing him speak these words, that was too powerful for her weakness to sustain, or that the lamp of life was wasted by the agonies she had before endur'd, is altogether uncertain, but she expir'd that moment, yielding up her last breath on the bosom of her too late repenting husband.

Love, pity, and remorse, now engross'd all his faculties ; — he kept his promise, acknow-

acknowledg'd her for his wife, had her interred, with the greatest funeral pomp, in his own family vault, and paid all imaginary honours to her memory; whether he will ever relapse into his former vanities it is time alone must shew; — but at present, this once gay thoughtless rover, either is, or affects to be, lost to the joys he lately was so fond of, — behaves with the utmost indifference towards the fair sex, — seldom goes to any public place, — seeks but little company at home; and, in fine, seems to be in every thing the very reverse of what he was.

This change, together with the occasion of it, was a terrible disappointment to many a flaunting belle who had plumed herself on his devoirs; but Apamia and Elutheria were the most deeply affected by it; — both these ladies had, in fact, too liberally rewarded his pretended passion not to be overwhelmed with grief and spite at the discovery of the deception he had put upon them, and that the heart they had labour'd to engross, and paid so dear a purchase for, had been the right of another before he had ever seen either of their faces.

But Apamia, who, besides a great spirit, had a good deal of the coquette in her

her nature, got rid of the chagrin more easily than her fair rival had the power to do; — that unhappy beauty, finding herself lost to love as well as to reputation, grew sick of the world, and retir'd into the country, resolving to return no more to a place which had been so fatal both to her honour and repose.

As to the sisters of the unfortunate Aristella, they were seiz'd with the most deep affliction, when they came to know the sad effects their rash resentment had occasion'd; which may serve as a warning to all persons not to be over hasty in censuring actions, the true meaning of which they cannot immediately comprehend.

End of the Fifth BOOK.



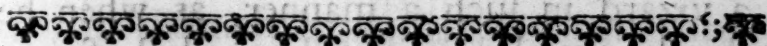
THE



THE
Invisible Spy.



BOOK VI.



CHAP. I.

*Is dedicated entirely to the Ladies, as
it relates an adventure which nearly
concerns them to take notice of.*



AMONG all the numerous
Modes which the wantonness
of luxury has of late years
introduced into this kingdom
for the destroying of time, I
know of none more fatal to the virtue
and reputation of the female sex than
Masquerades ; — I mean, as that amuse-
ment is at present conducted.

Indeed when a select company of ladies
and gentlemen agree among themselves,
VOL. III. I or

or are invited by some person of condition, to divert each other in such disguises as their several fancies shall make choice of, as practised in France and some other polite places, the case is widely different; for there, after passing a few hours in music, dancing, and pleasant raillery, according to the characters they assume, the masks are all thrown aside, and every one appears such as he is; — so that none will venture to talk or act beneath a vizard in such a manner, as when he stands reveal'd, will either reflect shame on himself, or give offence to those he has been entertaining; — Masquerades, thus managed, I cannot but allow to be not only innocent but laudable amusements, as they serve to whet the wit and exhilarate the mind.

But here, — sorry am I to say it, — the Masquerade houses may with propriety enough be call'd shops, where opportunities for immorality, prophaneness, obscenity, and almost every kind of vice, are retailed to any one who will become a customer; and at the low rate of seven and twenty shillings, the most abandon'd Courtezán, the most profligate Rake, or common Sharper, purchases the privilege of mingling with the first Peers and Peeresses of the realm, and not seldom affronts

affronts both modesty and greatness with impunity.

I perceive, to my very great satisfaction, that there are some Ladies, who, touch'd with a just sense of what is owing to their dignity, are determined not to expose themselves any more in a place where, if no worse ensues, the most licentious freedoms of speech, at least, are often offer'd to the chastest ears; and I am not without hope that the influence of their example will prevail on many others to do the same, so that next season the assemblies at the Masquerade-house will be composed of such only as are fit to herd together.

For the benefit, however, of the unwary, and those who by their small acquaintance in town are ignorant of the usage and customs of these dangerous amusements, it will not be amiss to relate an unhappy adventure which I was witness of, and may serve as a warning to all who are truly innocent and desire to remain so.

Alexis and Matilda were the son and daughter of two gentlemen who lived at a small village near Newcastle upon Tyne; — they had loved each other even before

either of them well knew what was meant by the passion, and as their understandings ripen'd, their inclinations increased in proportion : — hope, for some time, gilded the prospect of their mutual wishes ; but, when they least expected, a stop was put to the consummation by an unfortunate disagreement happening between their parents.

Alexis was forbid to see Matilda, and Matilda ever to think on Alexis ; but these commands had little authority over hearts so fondly enamour'd as theirs ; — they form'd the most romantic contrivances to keep alive the flame with which each had inspir'd the other, some of which succeeded so well as to enable them to continue a tender intercourse by letters, and even to gain some private interviews.

It was the father of Alexis who of the two had been the most refractory, and he dying a small time after, the young gentleman found means to reconcile matters so effectually with the parents of Matilda, that they at length consented to give her to him, and completed the happiness of the equally loving and beloved pair.

Matilda

Matilda, whose every care, and hope, and joy, had all been center'd in her dear Alexis, had nothing now to wish beyond what she was in possession of; and Alexis thought himself so blest'd, that he even defied the power of fortune to give him any cause of disquiet; — fatal security! — How little dependance for the future is there on the present good?

They had not long enjoy'd the sweets of this so-much desir'd union, before Matilda, who had never been in London, express'd some curiosity to see a place she had heard so much talk of; — Alexis, proud to embrace every opportunity of giving her pleasure, immediately took the hint, and told her he was ready to conduct her thither as soon as she should be prepar'd for her departure.

Accordingly they set out from the country, and arriv'd in London about the middle of September; — Alexis took ready furnish'd lodgings, in a handsome house near St. James's, for six months, in which time he thought he should be able to shew Matilda every thing worth her seeing in town.

Alexis had received his first precepts at Westminster school, and having no relations in London, his father requested me, by letters, to call sometimes at the house where he was boarded, and have an eye over his behaviour; — I did so, and the advice I gave him being deliver'd not in a magisterial but friendly manner, the lad conceived a very great affection for me from that time, and has preserved it ever since; — he made me the compliment of a first visit on his coming to town, — told me how happy he was, and begg'd I would be no stranger to the fair person who had made him so.

I accepted the invitation, and went the next day; — on his presenting Matilda to me I was struck with the extremest admiration; for besides a graceful air and shape, a delicate complexion, fine eyes, a set of the most lovely features I ever saw in one face; and, in fine, every thing that could constitute a perfect beauty, there was such a sweet simplicity, — such a chearful unaffected innocence shone through the whole, and brighten'd every grace, that I was in a manner dazzled, and could not forbear crying out with Carlos in the play,

“ If

- ‘ If the face be the index of the mind,
‘ She has a thousand treasur’d virtues
‘ there.

Alexis was quite transported at the tokens I gave of my approbation of the choice he had made; — the charming Matilda seem’d also highly pleas’d; but I could easily perceive she was not so through the vanity of hearing any praises on herself, but meerly because her dear Alexis was justified in the opinion of one whom she saw he look’d upon as his friend.

But how great soever the satisfaction was which this happy couple received from my behaviour towards them, I think it could scarce exceed what I felt in my own bosom, on finding so perfect a harmony, so uncounterfeited a tenderness, so warm an affection, reciprocally given and paid between two persons united in the manner they were, and whose love was not built on partial inclination, but on the real merits of each other, and confirm’d by the strongest principles of reason, virtue, and morality.

Alexis had never been but once in London since he went from school, and consequently knew but few people in it; as for Matilda, she was entirely a stranger to every body here, — yet both of them having all they wish'd for in each other, neither sought after or desir'd to make any new acquaintance, but kept always together, and never wanted a third person of their party.

As the sole excitement Matilda had to take a journey to London, was to gratify her curiosity with the sight of it, there was no eminent structure or place of note to which she was not conducted by her endearing husband; — he carry'd her to the Royal-Exchange, the Tower, the Cathedral of Paul's, the Palace at St. James's, the Parliament House, and Collegiate Church of St. Peter's, Westminster.

I accompanied them in the last mentioned tour, where, as we were walking and taking a survey of the venerable monuments of the illustrious dead, it pleased me much to observe the particular notice she took, above all others, of the Tomb of that princess of England, who, when her royal consort was wounded by a
poison'd

poison'd arrow in the Holy Land, and no other means remain'd for his recovery but by sucking out the venom from the bleeding orifice, willingly undertook the task, proud to meet an inevitable death to preserve the life of a husband whose safety was dearer to her than her own.

‘ How happy was this princess, said the sweet Matilda, in having such an opportunity of testifying her duty and conjugal affection ?’—‘ Few women, madam, answer’d I, would think themselves so, or make the same use of it she did.’—‘ They must then, return’d she with some warmth, have souls little capable of any sincere tenderness, or of a just sense of what is owing to that mysterious union, which makes the husband the far better part of the wife.’

Alexis had too much love and gratitude in his nature not to reply to what she said, in terms which shew’d how deeply he was touch’d with it, and would doubtless have expatiated much longer upon the theme, if they had been in any other place.

After having made her better acquainted with every thing in this Metropolis, than many can pretend to be

who have pass'd their whole lives upon the spot, he went with her to Hampton-Court, Windsor-Castle, Kensington, and the royal Hospitals of Greenwich and Chelsea, and also to several fine Villas on the banks of the river; — it would be endless to repeat the various excursions they made, so I shall only say, that there were nothing omitted to be shewn to her which might either enlarge her ideas or entertain her fancy.

A new scene of diversions open'd as the winter season came on; — Plays, Operas and Masquerades now began to attract the attention of all who would be thought polite; — the two first of these amusements Matilda was not altogether a stranger to, having often seen somewhat like them acted by strolling companies in the country; but she had not the least notion of Masquerades, and the little account Alexis was able to give her, making her more impatient to know what sort of entertainment they afforded, it may be easily supposed, by what has been already said, that so indulgent a husband would not suffer her to continue long in suspense; — it may be too, that he had some curiosity of his own to gratify in this point, having, it seems, never been at a Masquerade himself.

Tickets

Tickets accordingly were purchased, and masqueing habits hired; — I happen'd to make a morning visit the day they were to go, and found Matilda very busy in ornamenting a little Hat and Crook; — the moment I enter'd the room she told me, with the greatest pleasure in her countenance, that she was to be at the Masquerade that night, and was to assume the character of a Shepherdess; I reply'd, that she could not take upon her one more suitable to her youth and innocence: — we then fell into some discourse concerning Masquerades; — Alexis would fain have persuaded me to accompany them, but I excused myself in the words of an old blind fidler, who was in the streets when I came in, playing and singing to his instrument these lines:

‘ In youth when I did love,—did love-a,
‘ Methought it was wond’rous sweet-a;
‘ But now I am old, threescore and
‘ above-a,
‘ To be grave is wond’rous meet-a.’

‘ If you have no better excuse than
‘ this, cry’d Alexis laughing, it will not
‘ serve your turn.’ — ‘ I do not know,
‘ indeed, whether it will or not, reply’d
‘ I, for when old people afeet to be gay,
‘ they

‘ they ought to do it under a mask, to
‘ prevent being laugh’d at by the young;
‘ — but I have another reason, added I,
‘ which will admit of no objection; — I
‘ am both to dine and sup with some
‘ friends.’

This was, in effect, no false pretence, for I really had an engagement upon my hands, which to comply with, I took my leave of Alexis and Matilda much sooner than I should otherwise have done.

The company I went to breaking up about ten o’clock, which was somewhat sooner than I had expected, it came into my head, in spite of the little liking I ever had to Masquerades, to step in and see how Matilda, who had not been accustomed to any great assemblies, would behave among such a mingled rout.

In things of small consequence I seldom gave myself the trouble of a second thought, so, pursuing this start of curiosity, I went to a Habit-shop, put on a Domine, and hasted to that babel of hurry and confusion.

It was no difficult matter for me to discover the persons I sought after, as I knew the dresses they were in; — I soon dis-

distinguish'd the beautiful Shepherdess, and her husband by the blue Domine I had seen lying on a table in his dining-room : — I perceived there were many eyes upon Matilda ; for tho' her face was conceal'd, her lovely hair, which with a studied negligence hung in ringlets almost to her shoulders, her alabaster neck, her lovely shape and sprightly air, had somewhat in them sufficiently attractive.

But there was one who above all the rest seem'd particularly attentive to her motions, — he was in the habit of a Huntsman, a character which I afterwards had reason to say to myself suited very well the intentions he had in his head that night : — which way soever Matilda turn'd he took care not to lose sight of her ; but as she kept close to Alexis, neither he nor any one else had an opportunity of speaking to her.

I hover'd as near them as I could without being taken notice of, and it gave me a good deal of diversion, to see the surprise this innocent country lady testified at hearing the freedoms with which some people, who seem'd to be perfect strangers, accosted each other ; — one incident in particular, which tho' it had nothing extraordinary in it at a Masquerade,

querade appear'd wonderful to her ; —
it was this :

A Hermit, with more furrows on his vizard than in an acre of plough'd land, and a beard a foot and a half long, mingled with the thickest of the assembly, and leaning on his stick and looking round him, cry'd out with a voice conformable to his decrepid appearance : — ‘ Vanity ! — vanity ! — oh vanity of vanities ! ’ This exclamation drew a good deal of laughter, but no reply, ’till a smart lady, dress'd in a Spanish Bonaroba, gave him a slap on the shoulder, and saluted him in these terms :

Lady. ‘ Well, — my good father Sanctity, what makes that venerable beard of yours out of your cell at this time of night ? ’

Hermit. ‘ I came to warn such wanton minxes as you of your follies ; — to warn you of the dangers of the flesh and blood ; — to bid you leave off your Jellies, your Eringos, your Ratifée, and your Viper-wine ; — to bid you mortify your carnal thoughts, and do penance in cooling herbs and fountain water. ’

Lady.

Lady. ‘ Pray, is Arbor-Vitæ among
‘ your regimen of simples ?’

Hermit. ‘ Yes, I have one root ; but
‘ I never prescribe it without knowing
‘ the complexion and constitution of the
‘ person.’

Lady. ‘ What do you think of mine ?’

Hermit. ‘ First let me know the
‘ the Symptoms.’

Lady. ‘ As how ?’

Hermit. ‘ I will tell you.’

With these words he drew her apart from the company, and after a short conversation between themselves, went away together, — at which Matilda, who had lost no part of their behaviour, was so astonish’d that she could not forbear expressing herself to her husband on that occasion in terms which made the Huntsman, and some others who were near enough to hear what she said, laugh heartily at her simplicity and ignorance of the place she was in.

Presently

Presently after, a gentleman crossing the room with his mask in his hand, was known to Alexis, who on sight of him cry'd out to Matilda,

Alexis. ‘ Look yonder, my dear, —
‘ there is mr. Freeman ; — I never heard
‘ a syllable of his being in town ; — I
‘ will just step to him and tell him where
‘ we lodge ; — do you sit here ’till I
‘ come back.’

He then seated her on a bench, and went hastily after his friend, who had pass'd into another room ; — I now doubted not but that the Huntsman would snatch his opportunity of entertaining Matilda, but I lost sight of him in an instant ; — he vanish'd, as it were, from the place and I saw him no more ; — the fair Shepherdess, however, was not to remain neglected, — I found several were advancing towards her, one of whom was the most grotesque, as well as disagreeable figure I ever beheld ; — his stature was far from what could be call'd tall ; but the circumference of his carcass exceeded that of any three men in the whole assembly ; — his legs look'd like the pillars of a church porch, and when he mov'd, were at such a distance from each

each other, that a boar of a moderate size might easily pass between them without being incommoded; — he had on the habit of a Turkish Bashaw, which was the worst, indeed, he could have chose; — his huge ears, discover'd by the shortness of his turbant, hung upon his shoulders, as did the wallets under his chin upon his breast: — in a word, he could have no deformity that the dress he was in did not shew to advantage.

This enormous creature had no sooner reach'd the place where Matilda sat, than he threw himself down by her on the bench, and accosted her with language which I should never forgive myself, nor expect to be forgiven by my reader, to repeat; — but I was glad to find, by the whispers of some people behind me, that instead of a gentleman, as I at first took him for, he was no other than a Bully at a certain noted Brothel in Covent-Garden, and was known about town by the name of Lumper-Hammock. — See, ladies, what company you expose yourselves to at a Masquerade; — those, however, who give tickets, and dress up such wretches to make a party among you, deserve little of your favour.

I can-

I cannot pretend to say whether this fellow was encourag'd by any other person to behave to Matilda in the manner he did, merely to put her spirits into a hurry, or whether he was instigated to it only by his own impudence and brutality of nature; but whatever it might be, the situation of that poor lady was greatly to be pitied; — she mov'd by little and little as far from him as the bench would give her leave; but he still follow'd, and would needs keep close to her and persecute her with his ribald discourse; — sometimes she got up, and look'd round to see if her husband were coming to her relief; then sat down again, not daring to leave the place for fear of missing him; but all the time shew'd tokens of the utmost agitation of mind.

At length the blue Domine appear'd, on which she started from her seat, and running to him, cry'd, — 'Oh, my dear, I am glad you are come.' — He only reply'd, in a low voice, — 'Ay, ay, — let us be gone;' — and taking her by the hand led her hastily away.

I pleas'd myself with the thoughts of having seen Matilda safe under the protection

tection of her husband, and was equally so that he had discover'd little approbation of the Masquerade, by his leaving it at a time when the diversion was at its full height, and more company were coming in than going out.

But the satisfaction I enjoy'd in both these points vanish'd in a moment; — Alexis return'd, — his mask was now off, and he pass'd directly to the place where he had left Matilda, — then started back, — confusion and surprise overspread his face; — he threw his eyes wildly round the room, then ran through every part of it, and without considering how much he exposed himself to the ridicule of that giggling assembly, ask'd first of one and then of another, if they had seen a Shepherdess in green and silver, and if they knew what was become of her.

This struck me with an infinite concern, as it made me know Matilda had been deceiv'd by the sight of the blue Domine, and in spite of my unwillingness to let him see I had come to a place where I had refused to accompany him, was just stepping forward to inform him of what had happen'd, when a lady hearing his enquiries spoke to him in these terms :

Lady.

Lady. ‘ Sir, the lady I saw with you in
‘ the dress you mention, went away a little
‘ while ago with a gentleman in a blue
‘ Domine, much the same as your own.’

Alexis. ‘ Oh heavens! — what curst
‘ mistake is this!’

In uttering this exclamation he flew out of the room like lightning, without staying to thank the lady for the intelligence she had given him; — I follow’d as fast as I could, in order to see what he would do, and found him at the door of the house, encompass’d with Hackney-Coachmen, Chairmen and Link-boys, among whom he was vainly endeavouring to get some account of his lost Shepherdess; — one of them, it seems, had said he saw a lady in the habit he describ’d go into a coach with a gentleman, but could tell nothing either of the figure of the coach or where it was order’d to drive.

It will not be difficult for any one who is a husband, and who loves his wife, to judge of what Alexis must suffer in such a distracting circumstance: — It was very evident to him that his dear Matilda had been carried off, but by whom, or to what place, were things which seem’d altogether

together impossible for him to discover; and wanting the means either to prevent her ruin or his own dishonour, or to take vengeance on the ravisher for the injury he had done to both, could but fill him with reflections almost equally stabbing as the injury itself: — finding no information could be gain'd in the place where he was, he withdrew from the crowd, as I suppose, to consider what method he should pursue; for he continued in a fix'd posture for the space of two or three minutes at least, leaning against some rails before an adjacent house.

My heart bled for him, and if I had been capable of offering him either advice or consolation, would not have kept at the distance I did; but the accident that had happen'd was without a remedy, and I had often observ'd, that to preach up moderation in the first gusts of passion serve but to inflame it more.

I thought there were no measures he could take that night, yet imagining he had something in his head, was desirous of seeing what event his cogitations would produce, — I therefore laid hold of the opportunity I now had of stepping behind the cover of a hackney-coach in waiting, and girded on my Belt of Invisibility,

sibility, which I always carried in my pocket, in case any thing should fall in my way to give me occasion to make use of it.

The influence of my valuable gift had but just taken effect, by being warm upon my body, when Alexis rous'd himself out of the resvery he had been in, and walk'd very fast up the street; — I kept pace with him 'till he came to the house where he lodg'd; — the door being open'd by his own footman, who sat up for him, — ‘Is my wife come home, cry'd he?’ — the fellow answering in the negative, and seeming somewhat surpris'd at the question, he threw himself into the parlour, saying to himself:

Alexis. ‘How mad a hope did I entertain, that she might have found some means to escape the hands of her ravisher, and been here before me? — No, — no, — 'tis impossible; — the villain doubtless will secure his prey: — curs'd, curs'd Masquerade, invented by the fiends for the destruction of virtue.’

While he was thus speaking he tore off his Domine, with agonies not to be express'd,

press'd, and stamp'd it under his feet;—
then turning to his servant went on thus :

Alexis. ‘ William, your mistress is
‘ run away with, — stolen from me by
‘ some villain in a Domine like my own ;
‘ — she is lost for ever unless immediate-
‘ ly recover'd ; — fly this minute to
‘ every Tavern and Bagnio you can think
‘ on, — describe her habit, — enquire
‘ if such a one with a person in a blue
‘ Domine enter'd there ; — be gone
‘ this instant, while I run to a Justice of
‘ the Peace, and get a warrant to search
‘ in all suspected places.’

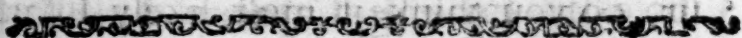
William. ‘ What part of the town,
‘ sir, do you think it most likely I shall
‘ hear of her ?’

Alexis. ‘ Alas I am as ignorant of
‘ that as you ; — but all parts must be
‘ search'd ; — fly then, good William ;
‘ and, do you hear, ask every Hackney-
‘ coachman you meet with if he set any
‘ such persons down, and where ; —
‘ away, I say, — stay not to consider, —
‘ a moment may confirm her ruin and
‘ my dishonour.’

The fellow obey'd without making any
farther reply ; but, I perceiv'd by his
coun-

countenance, was not very well contented with the errand he was sent upon; and Alexis went out of the house at the same time he did, in order to have recourse to a Magistrate in this exigence, as he had said he would.

I had no inclination to follow either master or man, on an expedition which promis'd so little success, therefore made all the haste I could to my own apartment, very much fatigued in body, yet much more so in mind, at the unfortunate mistake poor Matilda had fallen into, and which I had all the reason in the world to fear would be attended with the most dreadful consequences.



C H A P. II.

Contains the conclusion of a narrative, which I am certain there is one person in the world who cannot read without being fill'd with the most poignant remorse, unless he is as dead to all sense of humanity as of honour.

THE concern I was under, on account of the accident I had just come from being a witness of, would suffer me to

to enjoy but little repose the remaining part of that night ; — I could not think it practicable that the measures Alexis intended to take, or, indeed, any he could possibly pursue, would enable him to recover his dear Matilda ; at least 'till it was too late to save her from dishonour, and trembled for the effects which despair on such an event might probably occasion, both in one and the other.

My impatience to know if Matilda was yet come home, or if the researches of Alexis had gain'd him any information concerning her, made me resolve to go to his lodgings in the morning ; but whether I should make this visit in my Visible or Invisible Capacity I was for some time at a loss ; — at last it seem'd most eligible to appear in *propria persona*, as if I came only to ask some questions concerning the Masquerade, and how they approv'd of that diversion, as it was the first time they partook of it ; and also to take no notice of my being apprized of any thing had happen'd there, unless he related it to me himself, which I did not much doubt of his doing.

On my knocking at the door it was open'd by mrs. Soberton, for so the gentlewoman of the house was call'd ; —

after a short apology for the trouble I had given her, I ask'd if Alexis or his lady were yet stirring; to which, with a sorrowful countenance and tone of voice she reply'd:

Mrs. Soberton. ‘ Oh, sir, the strangest
 ‘ accident, — the saddest misfortune that
 ‘ ever was has happen’d; — I wish you
 ‘ had been here last night, or some good
 ‘ body, to comfort the poor gentleman;
 ‘ for indeed I am afraid he will go be-
 ‘ side himself.’

I affected a very great surprize on hearing this exclamation, and desir’d she would explain herself, if what she seem’d so full of was no secret; — she then made me this answer:

Mrs. Soberton. ‘ A secret; — no, sir,
 ‘ it can be no secret to all the town, much
 ‘ less to one so much a friend to the fa-
 ‘ mily as you are: — be pleas’d to walk
 ‘ in and I will tell you all; — I mean,
 ‘ all that is in my power, for Heaven only
 ‘ knows what the end will be.

In speaking these last words she threw the parlour door, which was then half shut, wide open to give me a more commodious entrance; — I went in, and
 t here

there was sitting by the fire-side an old gentleman who lodg'd in the second floor of the same house; — he was a shrewd man, but no great favourer of the women, as I afterwards found by his discourse.

Mrs. Soberton had no sooner drawn a chair, and oblig'd me to be seated, than she began to tell me that Matilda had been carried off from the Masquerade; — that her husband was in the utmost distraction on missing her; — the means he had made use of to find where she was conceal'd; but that all hitherto had been ineffectual, tho' himself and servant had been half over the town in search of her, with a thousand particulars which I either knew already or could easily guess at; and added, at the close of her long detail, one circumstance which I suppose she thought very material, — that the door of her house had never been shut a quarter of an hour together for the whole night, and that none of the family could get a wink of sleep.

I had scarce time to express the trouble I was in for my friend's misfortune, when the old gentleman took up the word, and said,

Old Gentleman. ‘ It is a very ugly accident, indeed, which way soever it came about, and I am heartily sorry for Aiexis ; — but it shews what vexations men are liable to bring upon themselves by marrying with these gay fine young women.’

Mrs. Soberton. I protest you are the saddest gentleman I ever knew in my life, — always against the poor women, — as if we alone were in fault for every thing ; — I know there are errors sometimes on both sides ; but take it in the general, am very confident that if the men were not more to blame than we are, there would not be so many unhappy marriages : — as for the lady in question, my lodger, I believe there is not a sweeter, better condition’d, and more modest creature breathing, nor one that loves her husband more.’

I join’d mrs. Soberton with some warmth in the vindication of Matilda’s character ; and added, that I knew her incapable of being guilty of any thing to forfeit it ; — to which the old gentleman reply’d :

Old

Old Gentleman. ‘ It may be as you
‘ say, — her inclinations may be perfectly
‘ good and virtuous, — God forbid I
‘ should harbour any thoughts to the
‘ contrary ; — but what business had she
‘ at the Masquerade ? — if women would
‘ stay at home, and mind their spinning
‘ and their needle, as in former days,
‘ none of these mischiefs would happen ;
‘ but they must be gadding abroad, and
‘ provoking temptations they are not al-
‘ ways able to resist. — One of our Poets,
‘ Otway I think it was, in my opinion,
‘ has a mighty pretty sentiment on this
‘ matter ; — if I remember right his
‘ words are these :

Woman to man first as a blessing given,
When innocence and love were in their
prime :

Happy a while in Paradise they lay ;
But quickly woman long’d to go astray ;
Some foolish new adventure needs must
prove,
And the first Devil she saw she chang’d
her love.

I was too much of the same mind with
this gentleman, as concerning Masque-
rades, to say any thing in the behalf of
those entertainments ; but urg’d in de-

fence of Matilda's conduct in this point, that being a country lady, desirous of seeing every thing in London, and went with her husband, she could not be apprehensive of any kind of danger while under his protection.

He either was, or had complaisance enough to feign himself convinced by the arguments I offer'd ; after which I took my leave ; but just as I was stepping out of the door I saw Alexis enter, or rather his ghost, for he appear'd more like the shadow than the real substance of my living friend ; — he saluted me, however, with his usual freedom and politeness, and when we came into the dining-room embraced me, and began the recital of his misfortune in this pathetic exclamation :

Alexis. ‘ Oh, my friend, I am undone ! — ruin'd, I fear, for ever ! —
‘ the author, giver and partaker of all
‘ my happiness is lost ! — torn from me
‘ by some lascivious, some inhuman villain ; and him whom yesterday you beheld the most blest of men, you now
‘ see the most accurs'd, most wretched
‘ and forlorn of all created beings !’

He then proceeded to inform me, as well as the distraction of his thoughts would

would give him leave, of the method he had taken for the recovery of his lost treasure; — how he had pass'd the whole night and that morning in search for her in every place to which he could imagine she might have been carry'd, and that hitherto all his enquiries had been entirely fruitless.

While he was speaking his servant came in, — he ask'd hastily if he had met with any success; to which question the fellow answering in the negative, his agonies redoubled, and never did despair, and rage, and grief, except in the case of suicide, produce more violent effects than what I now beheld in him.

Common compassion and good-nature, without the assistance of that friendship I had for him, would have oblig'd me to make use of my utmost endeavours to assuage his sorrows; though, indeed, the occasion of his distress was of so nice and delicate a kind, as render'd it very difficult to say any thing to the purpose.

Perceiving he had no thoughts of giving over his unavailing rambles, 'till he had gain'd some intelligence concerning her, I told him, that, in my opinion, there was but little probability of benefiting

K. 4

himself.

himself by those means ; that in an age which paid not much regard either to love or honour, he would only expose both himself and wife to the censures of a sneering town, and perhaps also make the ravisher more careful to conceal his prize.

This seeming to have some weight with him, I added, that I believ'd I could point him out a way which afforded a greater prospect of success than the one he had determin'd to pursue ; — on which he cry'd out to me to acquaint him with it.

I then advised him to put an advertisement in one of the Daily Papers, describing the shape and stature of Matilda as near as possible, with all the particulars of the habit she had on, and offering a handsome reward to any one who should give information of the place at which she alighted out of a Hackney-coach, in company with a gentleman in a blue Domine, between the hours of twelve and one at night : — ‘ This you may do, said I, ‘ without mentioning any name, except ‘ that of the person to whom such intelligence may be brought ; — and ’tis very ‘ likely that either the Coachman who ‘ carry’d her, or some one who might be ‘ about

‘ about the door where she was set down,
‘ or even the servants of the house will,
‘ for the sake of the gratuity, make that
‘ discovery which all your personal en-
‘ quiries might not be able to obtain.’

I had no sooner ended than a sudden dawn of chearfulness gleam’d upon his languid face, and to shew how much he approv’d of the thought I had communicated, took pen and paper and immediately wrote in almost the same terms I had express’d it; specifying, at the same time, a coffee-house where the reward should be paid on the requested intelligence being brought.

To keep up his spirits, after the advertisement was sent to the printer, I repeated the hopes I had that the success would answer, — on which he reply’d,

Alexis. ‘ Yes, my dear friend, the
‘ suspense I labour under is so exquisite
‘ a torture, that I would wish to put an
‘ end to it, though by the most cruel,
‘ the stabbing certainty, — according to
‘ the Poet’s axiom, that in all misfortunes

To know the worst is some degree of ease.

He could not utter these last words without a sigh which seem'd to rend his very heart-strings ; — then starting suddenly from his seat he cry'd out with the extremest vehemence,

Alexis. ‘ Oh, Matilda ! — my poor
‘ Matilda ! — what would I not give to
‘ purchase an opportunity of revenging
‘ thy sad undoing !’

Finding now that he was beginning to relapse into his former agonies, I made use of my utmost endeavours to bring him to believe what, indeed, I could not believe myself, — that there was a probability that his wife might in reality suffer no more from this adventure than the fright it must necessarily have put her into ; and that as it could not be doubted but that her virtue would resist all the temptations could be offer'd, so the same virtue would also enable her to triumph over the attacks of brutal violence.

I enforced what I said upon this score with all the examples I had ever read of, or at least could remember, in relation to ladies who had the good fortune to make converts of their intended ravishers, and turn what was meant for their dishonour into their glory ; and was at length
so

so far successful in this attempt, as to inspire him with a half hope that his dear Matilda might possibly return unviolated.

Having gain'd this point, I prevail'd on him to take some refreshment, which he could not but stand in great need of, as he had neither eat, nor drank, nor slept in so many hours; — at his earnest request I staid with him, and partook what might be more properly call'd a running banquet than a dinner, though, by mrs. Soberton's directions, elegantly enough prepar'd: — after this, nature, who will not be denied her rites, whatever vexations may intervene to rob her of them, spread a certain drowsiness upon his eye-lids, which I perceiving perswaded him to favour, and on my promising him to come again the same evening, or the next morning without fail, he lay down on the bed, and left me at liberty to pursue my inclinations.

As I had now no engagement upon my hands, and had not been at White's Chocolate-house for a considerable time, it was now my full design to go thither, and see what the company were doing; but as I had some very good reasons not to appear in that place, I stepp'd into the

first nook I found in my way, and put on my Belt of Invisibilty.

I was but just equipp'd, and passing on to my intended rout, when I saw a chair, with the curtains close drawn, stop at a few paces before me; — I should have taken no notice of this, if one of the fellows had not lifted up the top, and told the person in it, that he had forgot whether it were the Red or the Green Lamps; — the answer was given in a voice which I presently knew to be Matilda's; and if I had not so well remember'd, as I did, the accents, I should have suspected it was no other than herself, by her saying, — 'The Two Green Lamps.'

On finding it was she, the reader will easily believe I had more curiosity to see the interview between her and Alexis, than any thing else I could have in my head; — I follow'd the chair 'till it came to the house, and on the door being open'd slipp'd in with it; — on her alighting Mrs. Seberton ran out of the parlour, and was beginning to testify her joy at her return, tho' mingled with some demonstrations of surprise to see her in the condition she was, which, indeed, was deplorable enough; — her head with-

out,

out any other covering than a handkerchief tied carelessly over her dishevelled hair, — her garments torn, — her eyes swell'd with tears, — every feature distorted, and all the tokens of distraction and despair about her.

She made no answer to what the good gentlewoman said, but, after throwing some money to the chairmen, ran hastily up stairs into the dining-room, where flinging herself on a settee, — she cry'd out, — ‘Where is Alexis!’ — to which mrs. Soberton, who had follow'd as well as myself, reply'd, — ‘Oh, madam, you cannot imagine what trouble both he and all of us have had on your account.’

I know not whether that unhappy lady would have declared to mrs. Soberton any part of what had befallen her or not; for Alexis, who either had not fallen asleep, or was easily awak'd, heard his wife's voice and came flying out of the chamber that instant; — mrs. Soberton, discreetly judging that they might not chuse to have a third person witness of their discourse, went directly down stairs; but the Invisible remain'd, and his wonderful Tablets receiv'd the impression of the following dialogue between them:

Mali'da.

Matilda. ‘ Oh, Alexis, wherefore did
‘ you leave me !’

Alexis. ‘ Wherefore did you leave the
‘ place where I desir’d you should wait
‘ for my return !’

Matilda. ‘ I stirr’d not from it but to
‘ follow you, as I then thought.’

Alexis. ‘ Confusion ! — How could
‘ you be so mistaken !’

Matilda. ‘ Alas I had no apprehen-
‘ sion of the deception put upon me ! —
‘ his habit was exactly like yours ; — his
‘ stature much the same ; — he spoke in
‘ a low voice ; but if he had not, my
‘ spirits were in too much agitation at
‘ the impudence of a fellow who had just
‘ before accosted me, to have distinguish’d
‘ the difference.’

Alexis. ‘ Oh, my torn heart ! — But
‘ say, — who is the villain that betray’d
‘ you ! — Where were you carry’d !’

Matilda. ‘ Alas, — the precautions
‘ he took has left me ignorant of both ;
‘ and all I know is that I am undone.’

Alexis.

Alexis. ‘Distraction! — undone, and
‘ not know by whom! nor even in what
‘ place the horrid deed was perpetrated!
‘ — all means for my revenge barr’d up!
‘ — Yet perhaps I may be able to dis-
‘ cover something, — speak therefore, —
‘ tell me in an instant all the particulars
‘ of the story!’

Matilda. ‘I will, tho’ every word I
‘ utter will stab me to the soul, and in-
‘ flict anew the shocks I have under-
‘ gone.’

Alexis. ‘No preparations;—be quick,
‘ and answer my demand at once.’

Matilda. ‘Have patience then; for
‘ while you look so terrible I cannot
‘ speak.’

Alexis. ‘You cannot think I would
‘ hurt you; — speak then, thou wretch-
‘ ed woman, and break at once the heart
‘ of thy more wretched husband!’

Matilda. ‘Oh which way shall I be-
‘ gin! — how end!’

Alexis. ‘Keep me not on the rack!’

Matilda.

Matilda. ‘ Soon as I saw the counter-
‘ terfeit Alexis approach I rose to meet
‘ him, and on his bidding me come and
‘ stretching forth his hand I gave him
‘ mine, glad to find myself conducted
‘ from that mingled crowd which I had
‘ seen too much of to desire to continue
‘ any longer with ;—we went into a coach
‘ where I began to tell him how I had
‘ been affronted by an ugly huge man in
‘ a Turkish habit ; but he made no an-
‘ swer either to that or any other idle
‘ prate I entertain’d him with, ’till the
‘ coach stopp’d and he handed me into a
‘ house, the entry of which was full of
‘ men, who were running backwards and
‘ forwards with candles in their hands,
‘ and seem’d very busy :— I ask’d where
‘ we were going, — he still made no
‘ reply ; but after a short whisper to one
‘ of the fellows led me up stairs.’

Alexis. ‘ ‘Sdeath ! — why did you
‘ go ! — then was your time to have
‘ cry’d out for rescue !’

Matilda. ‘ What, from my husband !
‘ — I could not as yet know him from
‘ any other than yourself : — I was,
‘ indeed, a little surpris’d at this beha-
‘ viour ; but imagin’d it was owing to
‘ some

‘ some little whim you had taken into
‘ your head, on purpose to laugh at my
‘ simplicity. — Being warm with having
‘ my mask on so long, I pluck’d it off
‘ as soon as we got into the room, but he
‘ clapp’d it on again; — a man was then
‘ just entering with a bottle and glasses
‘ in his hand, which having set down on
‘ a table he immediately withdrew; —
‘ my conductor then bolted the door, and
‘ running towards me, said, — “ Now,
“ my angel, I may feast my eye with all
“ that heaven of beauty, which, while
“ beneath a cloud, attracted my admira-
“ tion, and you behold the man who
“ from this happy moment devotes him-
“ self entirely to your charms; ” — ‘ with
‘ these words he took off both mine and
‘ his own vizard; — I shriek’d, and
‘ surely had fainted with the fright, if an
‘ equal proportion of rage had not kept
‘ up my spirits.’

Alexis. ‘ What said he then?’

Matilda. ‘ A thousand romantic lyes,
‘ — such as I have read in Plays and
‘ Novels, which I answer’d only with re-
‘ vilings, ’till perceiving my just scorn
‘ had no effect upon him I had recourse
‘ to tears and entreaties; — told him I
‘ was a married woman, — that I had a
‘ husband

‘ husband dearer to me than my soul,
‘ and by whom I was as much belov’d,
‘ and conjur’d him not to detain me nor
‘ attempt to violate the sacred rites of
‘ marriage.’

Alexis. ‘ Did not this move him ?’

Matilda. ‘ Oh no, — not in the least,
‘ the audacious wretch but laugh’d at
‘ this remonstrance, — said that love,
‘ like all other appetites, demanded variety ; — that I was a fool, and knew
‘ not the true interest of my sex, but that
‘ he would instruct me better, and make
‘ me happy tho’ against my will.

Alexis. ‘ Execrable Dog ! — but go
‘ on.’

Matilda. ‘ You may easily believe,
‘ that he who could speak such words
‘ would also accompany them with actions
‘ of the same nature : — I resisted all I
‘ could the indecent liberties he took, —
‘ call’d Heaven and Earth to my assistance,
‘ but in vain ; — I was at last over-
‘ power’d : — in the midst of tears, reproaches,
‘ swoonings, he effected his
‘ brutal purpose, and made me the most
‘ miserable of women.’

Alexis.

Alexis. ‘ Most miserable, indeed! —
‘ After this, I suppose, he would have
‘ suffer’d you to depart?’

Matilda. ‘ Can you think me vile
‘ enough to continue one moment in the
‘ presence of that detested monster, when
‘ I was at liberty to leave him! — This,
‘ indeed, is cruel. — Oh Alexis! — I
‘ hate myself for what I have been com-
‘ pell’d to suffer, — do not you hate me
‘ too!’

Alexis. ‘ No, Matilda, I never can
‘ hate you; — but all the hopes of my
‘ eternal peace depend on a perfect know-
‘ ledge of every circumstance.’

Matilda. ‘ His first pretence of de-
‘ taining me was to persuade me to mo-
‘ deration; for in those dreadful mo-
‘ ments, had the means of death been in
‘ my power, I certainly should have com-
‘ mitted some desperate deed, either on
‘ myself or him: — he feign’d a contri-
‘ tion for following, as he said, the dic-
‘ tates of an ungovern’d passion, and for-
‘ cing from me a blessing which ought
‘ to have been the reward only of long
‘ and faithful services; — but soon I
‘ found that all these flatteries, — this
‘ counter-

‘ counterfeited softness had no other aim
‘ than to make me as wicked as he had
‘ made me wretched, and seduce me to
‘ consent to aid his brutal pleasures.’

Alexis. ‘ Could he have the vanity to
‘ imagine you believ’d him ?

Matilda. ‘ All my spirits had been
‘ before exhausted ; — I had no voice, no
‘ breath to speak ; and he, perhaps, in-
‘ terpreted my silence as a half yielding
‘ to his will : — he could not well dis-
‘ cern how much my looks disdain’d his
‘ suit ; for tho’ it was mid-day, no other
‘ light came into the room than what
‘ beam’d through two small holes in the
‘ window-shutters ; — he seem’d very
‘ alert, — threw open the windows, —
‘ unfasten’d the door, and order’d that
‘ something should be got ready to eat ;
‘ but when the waiter came in to spread
‘ the table, he oblig’d me to put on my
‘ mask, saying, — “ You see, my dear,
“ how careful I am of your reputation, —
“ I hope you will reward me for it.”

Alexis. ‘ The lowest hell reward him !
‘ — So then you dined together ?’

Matilda. ‘ Such an attempt would
‘ sure have choak’d me ; overcome, in-
‘ deed,

‘ deed, with thirst and faintness, I swallowed a little wine mingled with water ; but though he forced me to sit by him at the table, I neither could nor would partake of any thing was there ; — my refusal, however, nor the sight of my distraction, damp’d not his appetite, he both eat and drank heartily, and having finish’d his repast, pull’d me on his knee and said, — “ By heaven, in spite of all your peevish obstinacy I like you above all the women in the world, and if you will leave your husband and consent to be my mistress, I have the power as well as inclination to support you in a fashion equal to that you live in with the man you are married to, be he of what rank soever.” — ‘ I reply’d, with all the resolution I could muster up, that I despis’d his offers as much as I hated himself, and would receive no favours from him but the means of returning to my dear injur’d husband ; — on this he paus’d, but still held me fast, and looking earnestly on my face at last spoke thus : — “ Well then, since it is so, and we must part, let us part at least as lovers should do, and if I never must hope to see you more, should be a fool not to make the most I can of the present opportunity ;” — ‘ with these words he bore me to the bed, and,

‘ and, — oh, Alexis! how shall I repeat
‘ it! — triumph’d a second time over the
‘ feeble resistance I then had strength to
‘ make; — he afterwards used no argu-
‘ ments to win me to forgiveness, but per-
‘ ceiving the day was near closed in, said
‘ to me, with a kind of sneer,’ — “ Ma-
“ dam, you shall be obey’d, — shall go
“ home to the husband you are so fond
“ on;” ‘ and then rung the bell for the
‘ waiter to call a coach; and when told
‘ there was one at the door, tied a hand-
‘ kerchief cross my eyes, I suppose, to pre-
‘ vent my having any knowledge of that
‘ scene of my undoing; — he led me down
‘ stairs, put me into the coach, and came
‘ in himself; but spoke little ’till we
‘ stopp’d at a place which I think I have
‘ heard you say they call Covent Garden,
‘ there set me down, and bid the coach-
‘ man drive back to the place where we
‘ came from as fast as he could, — I pluck’d
‘ the handkerchief off my eyes and threw
‘ it over my head, my cap and hat being
‘ lost in the fruitless struggles I had
‘ made; — there were several chairs, I
‘ stepp’d into the nearest to me, and was
‘ brought home in the deplorable situa-
‘ tion you now see me.’

Alexis. ‘ Oh ’tis too much for man to
‘ bear! — Yet one thing more, Matilda,
‘ — de-

‘ — describe, as near as possible, the features and complexion of this inhuman ravisher.’

Matilda. ‘ Alas, the horror I was in from the first moment I found myself in the power of a stranger hinder’d me from taking any great notice; — all I can say is, that he had dark eyes, a clear and ruddy skin, and though his behaviour render’d him odious to me, with others I believe he may pass for handsome.’

Alexis. ‘ Young I suppose.’

Matilda. ‘ About five or six and twenty, as far as I can judge.’

Alexis. ‘ Had he the appearance of a man of rank and fortune?’

Matilda. ‘ Every thing I saw about him, which properly belong’d to himself, bespoke him such; — but doubly disguised. — Did you not take notice of an Huntsman at the Masquerade?’

Alexis. ‘ Yes, and remember he always kept pretty near to us. — Was he the ravisher?’

Matilda.

Matilda. ‘ The same ; — he told me
‘ that he had his eye upon me from the
‘ first moment I came in, and when he
‘ saw you left me, ran and procur’d a
‘ Domine as like to yours as he could get,
‘ in hopes I might be, as alas I really
‘ was, deceiv’d by that fatal habit.’

Alexis. ‘ ’Tis well ; — I may perhaps
‘ hunt him.’

The eyes of Alexis seem’d to flash fire while he utter’d these words ; — after which he stood musing for some time, — then turning to his wife, who still sat weeping in the same posture she had thrown herself into at her entrance, spoke thus to her :

Alexis. ‘ Rise, Matilda, retire to your
‘ chamber and endeavour to compose
‘ yourself to rest.’

Matilda. ‘ What so early ? — ’tis not
‘ yet six o’clock.’

Alexis. ‘ No matter, — your condi-
‘ tion requires it, — you have wak’d too
‘ long, — therefore pray go.

Matilda.

Matilda. ‘ Will you come too?’

Alexis. ‘ Do not expect me, — I have
‘ much to think upon and must be alone.’

Matilda. ‘ Oh, Alexis! — ’tis as I
‘ fear’d, I am now grown loathsome in
‘ your sight.’

Alexis. ‘ No, no, — not so; but there
‘ is a fermentation in my mind which
‘ must have time to settle, — to-mor-
‘ row I may be more at ease; — I
‘ pray you then to give me liberty this
‘ night.’

Matilda. ‘ Well, you shall be obey’d.’

With this she took a candle and withdrew; but with a look and gesture so truly pity-moving, that if a painter had been to draw the picture of Despair he could not have copy’d from an original more striking.

He then call’d for mrs. Soberton, told her his wife had been very much frightened, and was indisposed, so begg’d she would assist her in any thing she might happen to stand in need of, and also that she would order a bed to be got ready for

him in another chamber ; — she reply'd, with a great many low curtsies, that she would take care his commands should be obey'd, and that she should think nothing in her power too much to serve the good lady.

She said no more, but went out of the room, I suppose, to do what he request-ed of her ; — I was about to follow her, but seeing Alexis put on his wig, which he had pluck'd off when he went to lie down, thought he was going on some expedition which might be worth my taking the pains to explore ; — to this end I slipp'd down stairs while he was taking up his sword and hat, — got out of the house before him, — divested myself of my Belt, — became visible, and met him some few paces distant.

I told him I was returning to his lodgings according to my promise, and affected some surprise at seeing him abroad ; — he seem'd pleas'd that he had not miss'd me, and repeated, in a few words, the sum of what I have been relating ; adding, that he now flatter'd himself with being able to trace out the person who had injur'd him, by the description Matilda had given of him, — and then intreated I would be so good as to accompany him in the
search

search he was about to make ; — to which request I readily consented.

I found his scheme was, to enquire among those people who let out dresses for the Masquerade, if any account could be given of a gentleman who the night before had hir'd first the habit of a Huntsman, and afterwards a blue Domine : — the thing, indeed, seem'd feasible enough in itself, though it did not answer expectation. — We went to several shops without receiving the least information ; and all we could at last obtain was, that a gentleman, habited like a Huntsman, had come in a very great hurry for a blue Domine, which had not been return'd 'till about half an hour before our coming ; — but the name or quality of the person who hir'd it, the woman protested to us she knew nothing of.

Alexis then demanded, somewhat hastily, who it was had brought it back : — she smil'd both at this interrogatory and the manner in which it was made, and reply'd, that she was talking to customers at that time in the shop ; but if she had been less engag'd she should scarce have taken any notice ; — ‘ For, said she, provided we have our goods again, and are

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‘ paid

‘ paid for the use of them, it is not our
‘ business to examine any farther.’

Here ended the fruitless search of Alexis; — he had now no shadow of hope for discovering the ravisher but in the advertisement I had persuaded him to get inserted in the News Papers, and his despair became so outrageous that it was with much difficulty I prevail’d upon him to go home.

I went with him, fearing if he was left alone in the street he might be guilty of some extravagancy; — it was one of the most fine frosty nights I had ever seen, and while we were knocking at the door he look’d up towards the sky, and, with a voice denoting the extremest bitterness of heart, burst into this exclamation:

Alexis. ‘ How many thousand twink-
‘ ling stars are there, yet not one among
‘ them all a friend to me or poor undone
‘ Matilda!’

I went in with him to the chamber Mrs. Soberton had caused to be provided for him, nor would leave him ’till I had seen him in bed; — after which I gave William a caution not to go to sleep, but keep near his master and be attentive to
all

all his motions, in order to prevent any fatal effect of the present distraction of his mind.

I shall not trouble the reader with any account of the anxiety I was in at the condition in which I had left this worthy, though ill-fated pair ; — I shall only say, it was such as made me quit my bed very early the next morning, with a resolution to exert my utmost endeavours for the mitigation of their sorrows, and, if possible, to reconcile Alexis to a misfortune which was without a remedy ; but, unluckily for my design, a person came to speak with me the moment I was going out ; — the business which had brought him very nearly concern'd me, and some papers which I was oblig'd to look over detain'd me 'till almost twelve o'clock.

On my arrival at the place where I so much wish'd to be, I found Alexis just come in before me ; — he appear'd with a countenance much more compos'd than the night before, but very pensive and melancholy ; — he presently acquainted me, however, with the occasion of his having been abroad ; — it was this :

He told me he had pass'd the whole night in considering how he should act

in relation to Matilda, and finding it a thing inconsistent with his honour to suffer her to remain in town after what had happen'd, he resolv'd to send her immediately into the country, and was just return'd from hiring a Post-chaise for that purpose ; — the reason he gave for his proceeding in this manner was as follows :

Alexis. ‘ She cannot remain here and
 ‘ be shut up, she must appear sometimes ;
 ‘ — and who can tell but that in some
 ‘ unlucky minute she may be seen by the
 ‘ very villain who has ruin'd her, and
 ‘ who, either through curiosity or the
 ‘ desire of renewing the gratification of
 ‘ his vicious flame, may discover whose
 ‘ wife she is, and wherever he sees me
 ‘ point me to his lewd companions for
 ‘ the wretch he has made me ?’

I had nothing to offer in opposition to what he said on this score ; for, indeed, I thought it very proper that they should both retire into the country ; — so reply'd, that I was glad I had call'd that morning, otherwise I should not have had the opportunity of wishing them a good journey : — to which he hastily rejoin'd, — ‘ I shall not go.’ — ‘ How !’ cry'd I, somewhat surpris'd, do you
 ‘ send away Matilda and stay behind
 ‘ your-

‘yourself!’ — A deep sigh was the first answer he gave; but the testimony of his discontent was presently succeeded by these words:

Alexis. ‘Yes, my friend, — she must go without me; — two days ago nothing was so precious to me as her presence; — I liv’d, indeed, but in her sight; — every glance — every look she gave shot pleasure to my heart; — but now, alas! those happy moments are for ever fled, and I can regard her as no other than the ruin’d reliques of the woman once so dear to me.’

It was in vain I represented to him, that as I doubted not but he was perfectly convinced of the purity of Matilda’s mind, he ought not to love her less for the violence her person had sustain’d: — he own’d the justness of my reasons, but could not prevail on himself to be govern’d by them; and when I urg’d the cruelty of sending her so long a journey without any companion to alleviate her sorrows, he made me this reply:

Alexis. ‘She does not go alone, — her waiting-maid, who soon after our arrival in town was oblig’d to be remov’d

‘ on account of the small-pox, is now
‘ quite recover’d, and came home last
‘ night ; — this girl has attended Ma-
‘ tilda for some years, and I know will
‘ be very careful of her.’

While we were discoursing the chaise came to the door, on which Alexis call’d to have the luggage put in, and his wife to make herself ready : — I ask’d him if he thought it proper I should take my leave of Matilda before her departure ; — he reply’d, that it was a ceremony which he believ’d she would gladly be dispensed with from receiving, in her present unhappy situation ; — but begg’d I would stay in the dining-room ’till he had dispatch’d this disagreeable affair.

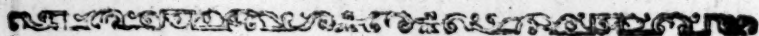
With these words he went out of the room, and I remain’d where I was ; — in less than half a quarter of an hour, looking thro’ the window, I saw the disconsolate Matilda go out of the house, supported on one side by Alexis, and on the other by her attendant ; — I could not see her face, but her motions, and the distracted air with which she threw herself into the chaise, were enough to convince me of the extreme wretchedness of her condition.

Alexis

Alexis return'd to me in a situation little less pity-moving yet could not my heart altogether absolve him for this last part of his behaviour towards Matilda ; — it was now, however, a time to apply rather balms than corrosives to his bleeding and despairing mind ; I therefore said every thing in my power which I thought might administer consolation to him ; but all my endeavours that way were unsuccessful, and though I staid with him the greatest part of the day, had the mortification to leave him as I found him.

Oh! had the dark unknown beheld the sad effects his wild inordinate desires produced, he surely could not have sustain'd the shock, but must have reveng'd upon himself the mischiefs he had brought upon two worthy persons so lately blest'd, so truly loving and beloved.





C H A P. III.

Consists of some farther particulars relative to the preceding adventure, which came to the Author's knowledge after the departure of Matilda from London; with two letters wrote by that unfortunate lady to her husband in her exile, which it is hoped will not be an unwelcome present to the Public, especially to those who have hearts not utterly incapable of being affected with the woes of others.

I Am very much afraid that Alexis will stand but little justified in the opinion of my fair readers for his conduct towards Matilda; — they will doubtless say, that the love he pretended to have for her had taken but a shallow root in his heart, when it could be shaken by a misfortune which she had no way contributed to bring upon herself.

They will, perhaps, also add, that after she had with so much simplicity, some may think folly too, revealed to him the whole of what had befallen her, it was
not

not only unkind, but highly ungenerous and cruel in him to abandon her to despair at a time when she had so much need of the tenderest compassion and consolation.

I must confess, indeed, that these accusations have the strongest appearance of reason on their side ; yet I must take upon me, notwithstanding, to aver, that Alexis in this point was influenced by a principle which is among the things, which tho' we cannot prove to be so, yet we know in fact are so ; and how much a paradox soever it may seem to some, Love, when in excess, may, on more occasions than one, produce the same effects as Hate.

I know not whether there are many ladies would like to be loved in this manner ; for certain it is, that it was chiefly owing to the too refin'd delicacy of the passion Alexis was possess'd of for Matilda that made them both so greatly wretched ; — the thoughts that another, though by force, had revell'd in her charms, depriv'd those charms of all their relish, and sicken'd every wish.

When we have been talking together on this head, often have I heard him, in the utmost bitterness of heart, express himself in these terms :

Aleixs. ‘ I still adore her mind ; —
‘ I know it all compos’d of sweetness,
‘ innocence, and heavenly truth ; — but,
‘ oh ! the blemish cast upon her person
‘ cannot be wash’d off but with the vil-
‘ lain’s blood ; and unless fate allows me
‘ the means of doing her and myself that
‘ justice, can never look upon her but as
‘ the ghost of my once dear wife.’

Finding that to prevail on him to live with Matilda as a wife was a thing utterly impracticable, at least ’till time had a little mellow’d the asperity of his resentment, I forbore any farther speech on that head, believing that if a change in Matilda’s favour should ever happen, it must come wholly of himself, and not by the arguments of another.

It will be easy for the reader to judge of how little efficacy the persuasions of any friend could be to move him, when those of the tender, the endearing, the so lately ador’d Matilda prov’d in vain, which abundantly appear by the many letters she sent to him after her banishment, two only of which I got an opportunity of transcribing, and here present them to the public as a specimen of the rest.

The

The first was wrote immediately on her arrival at their country seat, and contain'd these lines :

TO ALEXIS.

“ My dear, dear ALEXIS,

“ **I** Am a sufficient proof that grief is
“ not so fatal as some people would
“ represent it, since I live to tell you I
“ am safely arriv'd at ***** ; — yes,
“ — I am return'd to that once blissful
“ scene of soft delights, — of pure and
“ virtuous love ;—but, oh ! that Heaven
“ is fled, a sad reverse supplies its place,
“ and wheresoever I turn my eyes, horrors
“ instead of joys rise to my distract-
“ ed view !

“ I remember that when you turn'd
“ me from you, your last words to me
“ were, — be comforted, Matilda. —
“ Alas ! you full well know, that with-
“ out Alexis there is no comfort for Ma-
“ tilda ; — your presence is the only
“ balsam can assuage the tortures of my
“ poor burning, bleeding, agonizing
“ heart ! — if then, indeed, you wish
“ me less the wretch I am, let me not
“ linger long in a banishment more cruel
“ than death ! — quit that detested town,
“ — fly

“ — fly to my relief, and at least join
“ with me in bewailing what is past a
“ remedy.

“ But, oh ! — I have too much cause
“ to fear you have totally withdrawn all
“ your affection from me, and am doubly
“ miserable in a consciousness of being
“ now render’d unworthy to retain it ! —
“ yet had sickness, or any other acci-
“ dent, deprived me of that little beauty
“ nature has bestow’d upon me, and
“ made me become lame, or blind, or
“ crooked, I flatter myself you would
“ have lov’d me still ; — you would
“ then have pitied and cherish’d me in
“ your bosom ; — and sure the misfor-
“ tune that has befallen me was as far re-
“ mov’d from my seeking as any of those
“ I have mention’d could possibly be.

“ I will not, however, anticipate the
“ doom I so much dread, — will not
“ give way to apprehensions distracting to
“ myself, and, I hope, injurious to you ;
“ — I know you are generous and just,
“ and will endeavour to assure myself
“ those noble principles, even without
“ the aid of tenderness, will not permit
“ you to hate me, to throw me off for
“ ever, for my person having sustain’d a
“ violence, to which I am persuaded you
“ are

“ are convinced my mind was incapable
“ of consenting : — I will believe that
“ you feel all my woes, participate in
“ my anguish, and that my pen ought
“ rather to flow with words of consolation
“ than that reproach.

“ Yet if it is ordain'd that we must
“ both be wretched, let us be wretched
“ together ; — let us mingle our tears,
“ and interchangeably eccho back each
“ others sighs ; — let us indulge despair,
“ — recal the memory of those blissful
“ hours we once enjoy'd, — compare the
“ present with the past, and join in curses
“ on the base, the inhuman author of
“ our mutual woes !

“ But whither does my inconsiderate
“ passion lead me ! — does it become
“ the love, the tenderness, the duty of a
“ wife, to wish you should partake my
“ ruin ! — no, — since I can no longer
“ contribute to your happiness, rather
“ forget, renounce, abandon me for
“ ever ! — Yet, oh ! 'tis hard ; — my
“ brain grows wild on the reflection ; —
“ I can proceed no farther. — Pity me,
“ my most dear, my most ador'd Alexis !
“ pity, — oh pity,

“ The undone,

“ The lost MATILDA !

“ P. S.

“ If these distracting lines have any
 “ power to move your soul! — if any
 “ remains of soft compassion towards me
 “ still dwell within your breast, write to
 “ me by the first post! — fix, I beseech
 “ you, my uncertain fate! — oh that I
 “ should live to stand in need of entrea-
 “ ties to hear from you!”

When Alexis shew'd me the above, he
 seem'd all dissolv'd in a flood of love and
 tenderness; yet I believe the answer he
 sent to it was dictated in terms not al-
 together so satisfactory to Matilda as the
 present disturbance of her mind requir'd.

Here follows the second melancholy
 epistle of that unfortunate lady.

TO ALEXIS.

“ My for ever dear, tho' much unkind
 “ ALEXIS,

“ **W**ITH what anxiety have I watch-
 “ ed the arrival of the post! —
 “ how counted the tedious minutes as
 “ they glided on! — how trembled be-
 “ tween hope and fear on every knock
 “ was given at the gate, while in expec-
 “ tation of a letter from you! — at last
 “ it

“ it came ; — but, oh ! I am not more
“ at ease !

“ Wherefore, Alexis, do you keep
“ me in this cruel suspense ! — I ask’d
“ no impossibilities of you, — desir’d you
“ not to love me still, — I only begg’d
“ the decision of my fate ; and sure that
“ is not a request too much for me to
“ make, or you to grant !

“ My father, uncles, all my kindred
“ and acquaintance, nay, our very ser-
“ vants, stand amaz’d to see me here
“ without you ; — they perceive my
“ alter’d looks, and with officious love
“ enquire into the cause : — all the answer
“ I can make is, — that the air of Lon-
“ don not agreeing with my constitution,
“ I hurry’d back before some business
“ you had in town would permit you to
“ return.

“ These excuses may pass current for
“ a time, but cannot do so long ; — I
“ conjure you therefore, by all you have
“ to hope, or fear, or wish, not to ex-
“ pose yourself and me to conjectures
“ which cannot be to the advantage of
“ either of our characters ; — pronounce
“ my doom, — say that you will return,
“ and live with me, in all appearance,
“ as

“ as before ; or scruple not to let me
“ know you have resolved on an eternal
“ separation, that I may retire at once
“ to some dark corner of the world,
“ and shut myself up from pity and con-
“ tempt.

“ I know this ought to have been
“ thought upon before you obliged me
“ to remove from London ; but both of
“ us were in too much confusion at the
“ time of parting to give our cooler
“ reason any room to operate ; — we
“ have since, however, had leisure to re-
“ flect on what was proper to be done in
“ our unhappy circumstances ; and I flat-
“ ter myself you will not think me too
“ presuming in being the first to men-
“ tion it.

“ Oh, Alexis ! imagine not that when
“ I urge you to this eclaircissement, that
“ I am so vain as to sooth my fond heart
“ with a belief that since the dreadful ac-
“ cident has happen'd to me you ever
“ can love me as you have done ; — no,
“ I rather expect my sentence will be that
“ of an everlasting banishment ; — per-
“ haps it is already sign'd within your
“ breast, and the compassion you have
“ for me alone delays the execution.

“ If

“ If this should be the case, — throw
“ aside that cruel mercy which conceals it
“ from me, I beseech you ; — grief and
“ despair has given me fortitude to bear
“ the worst of ills, and sure there can be
“ none half so dreadful to me as seeing
“ you no more ; — so much the better
“ for my eternal peace, as it will the
“ sooner rid me of the burden of a hated
“ life ; — but I will trouble you no more
“ than to renew my petition of knowing
“ in your next letter what it is you have
“ in effect decreed for

“ The innocently criminal

“ MATILDA.

“ P. S. Your old acquaintance and fel-
“ low-collegian, mr. L —, has just now
“ sent to enquire when you are expected
“ down ; — he designs, it seems, to set
“ up at the next General Election for the
“ Borough of *****, and greatly de-
“ pends on the interest he knows you
“ have in that place, — I suppose you
“ will shortly receive a letter from him-
“ self on the occasion ; — oh may the
“ calls of friendship give weight to those
“ I have mention'd, and influence you
“ to return.”

I hap-

I happen'd to be with Alexis at the time of his receiving this; — he first read it to himself, — then communicated it to me, and when he had finish'd cry'd out with an extraordinary emotion,

Alexis. ‘ Poor Matilda! — unhappy charming woman! — with what enchanting eloquence does she plead against herself! — how sweetly labour to oppose what she most wishes to obtain.’

As I found the strongest reason in the arguments urg'd in Matilda's letter, I must confess that I was at a loss to comprehend what he meant by speaking in this manner, therefore desir'd he would explain himself, which he immediately did in these terms :

Alexis. ‘ O, friend, the more I discover of her merit, the less I am able to forget the violation of her honour; — I must cease to love her as I do, — must bring myself to look upon her with the same indifference that most husbands do upon their wives, before I can support, with any tolerable degree of patience, the thoughts that another has possess'd her.’

Thus.

Thus did he always talk whenever we were alone together, and any mention of his wife came upon the carpet, as it seldom fail'd to do on some occasion or other ; — had Matilda known his sentiments, I believe it would be a moot point whether she would not rather have chose a separation than to live with him, after he had reduced himself to such a state of insensibility.

He now, indeed, began to give great indications that he had nothing more at heart than to lose all remembrance, not only of the injury done to Matilda, but of herself also ; — by very swift degrees he became the reverse of what he was before his going to that fatal Masquerade ; — the pleasures of the bottle, and the conversation of the looser part of woman-kind, divide too much of his time between them, and he seeks in riots and debaucheries his relief from melancholy.

I am told, however, that he is at present preparing to set out for ***** ; but what satisfaction can the virtuous Matilda receive from his return thus transform'd, — thus debased in morals and behaviour from the man she had so dearly loved,

loved, and who was once so worthy her esteem?

How sad a reverse has a few weeks made in the condition of this lately happy pair! — surely the wretch, for so I must call him, be he of what degree or rank soever, who for the sake of gratifying the fleeting pleasure of a moment has brought this ruin on them, ought never to be forgiven in this world, whatever a sincere contrition, if he is capable of it, may entitle him to in the next.



C H A P. IV.

The Author having found something in his rambles, which he supposes may be of some value to the right owner, to shew his readiness to restore it, condescends to take upon himself the office of a Town-Cryer; — but waves the ceremony of the great O-Yes three times repeated.

HAppening one morning to wake more early than ordinary, I quitted my bed, and the weather being fine, and my humour more inclined to seriousness than gaiety,

gaiety, I took a little promenade, not with the least design or expectation of making any discovery of other people's affairs, but merely to think of my own with more liberty than I could do at home. — I met no living creature in my way except some few birds that perch'd upon the twigs of the yet leafless trees, and in melodious notes chanted forth praises to the approaching spring; — these rather indulging than confounding meditation, I pass'd slowly on by the side of the Serpentine-River, where, as I was bury'd in reflection on things which the reader has no business to be acquainted with, my eyes were attracted with the sight of a white fatten pocket lying just before me, — I suppose it might have been dropp'd from some lady's side the night before; for on my taking it up I found it extremely damp with the dew which always falls in absence of the sun.

I look'd upon this as a lawful prize, and that I had a right to keep it; at least 'till I could find somebody that had a better title; — I therefore tied it up in my handkerchief, and after having finish'd my walk took it home with me, where my impatience did not suffer me to continue long without examining what it contain'd; — I shall give a faithful inventory

ventory of all the particulars, reserving only one in petto, in order to prevent being imposed upon by any fictitious claimant.

Money being the chief idol of mankind, I shall give that the preference, and begin with the Purse, which had in it five gold ducats, a leaden French shilling, a bent half-crown, and a medal of the Duke of Cumberland in copper, very curious, but by some accident had been crack'd, and the impression in several parts pretty much erased.

Having look'd over these pieces, I put them carefully back into the Purse whence I had taken them, and then proceeded to a farther scrutiny.

The next thing that presented itself was a very small Pocket-book, which I shall forbear to describe, as well as to make any mention of the several memorandums it contain'd, to any person in the world but to the lady who wrote and shall come to demand them.

There was also a chrystal Smelling-bottle half full of Sal Armoniac, a tortoise-shell Snuff-box rimm'd with gold, and a naked Venus painted on the inside.

But

But the most valuable part of this cargo, at least according to my opinion, was some papers, — not Bank-Bills, — but letters and other writings more deserving the attention of the public, and which I shall make no scruple to insert, as they gradually fell under my inspection; especially as all of them having been sent under covers, which were not in the packet, the name of the lady to whom they were directed can only be guess'd at.

LETTER I.

“ MADAM,

“ **I** Now send you the Catalogue you
“ have so often requested of me; but
“ intreat you will be so good as not to
“ let any one soul in the world know
“ you had it from him who has the ho-
“ nour to be,

“ With the greatest respect,

“ MADAM,

“ Your most humble,

“ And most devoted servant.

The name subscrib'd to this had been torn off, either by design or accident;

but the paper which accompany'd it was perfect and entire: — here follows a faithful transcript.

A CATALOGUE of some very scarce and curious pieces, in Prose and Verse, all wrote by some of the most eminent hands.

1. **T**HE Art of Pleasing in Conversation. An heroic Poem. — By the E— of C—.

2. An Essay on Power. Wrote originally in High Dutch, and now translated by a person of distinction into English. — Bound in red Turkey, finely gilt and letter'd.

3. The Virtues of Carmine, with a Recipe how to prepare it with success, — *probatum est.* — By the C— of C—. Gilt back and letter'd.

4. Patient Grizel. A Poem in six Cantos. — By the real C— of C—. Bound in Calf, very plain.

5. The Politician defeated. A Novel. In three Parts. — By the E— of E—. Stitch'd in blue Paper.

6. The

6. The Croaker. A Tragi-comical Farce of one Act. — By L— R —.

7. Cookery improv'd, after the Epicurean stile. — By a Club of Gentlemen. In sheets.

8. The Chaste Maid; or, A new Way to amuse the Town. — A Comedy of three Acts, each sufficient for a Winter Night's Entertainment. — By the facetious H— F—, Esq;

9. Rules to chuse a Wife; shewing the Absurdity of all those generally observed. — By Sir J— C—. In Boards.

10. A philosophical Definition of Card-Craft, — upwards of forty Years compiling — By the very learned and most ingenious Professor Mr. H—e. Stitch'd in gilt Paper.

11. Frugality. A Poem. In nine Cantos. — By the C— of B—, Bound in Vellum.

10. A Collection of Jests and merry Phrases, to keep young Pupils Heads from aching with more laborious Studies. — By a Tutor in the modish Sciences.

Finely bound in blue Turkey, gilt back and letter'd.

13. Try before you buy. A Poem after the manner of Hudibras. — By the E— of R—. In Boards.

14. The Charms of Novelty. A Pindaric Essay. — By miss C—. In Sheets.

15. The Pleasures of Matrimony ; or, who would not be a Husband. A Farce. — By L— V—. Stitch'd, and very much sullied with often reading.

16. A Dissertation on Flys Eggs. — By the President of a learned Society. In Boards.

17. Laugh and lie down. A Ballad Opera of three Acts. — By L— P—. Sith'd in blue Paper.

18. An Essay to prove that true Honour is always concomitant with good Sense. — By the E— of O—. Bound in plain blue Turkey.

19. Conjugal Love. A Pastoral, of one continued Scene. — By the E— of N. Printed on a new Elzevir letter, and neatly bound without tawdriness or affectation.

20. The

20 The Patriot. A secret History.
— By G—— D——, Esq; Bound in
clouded Calf.

21. The Double Dealer; or, The
Westminster Disappointment. A Farce
of two Acts. — By Sir G—— V—— ..
Stitch'd in Cap Paper.

22. An Eulogy on Apostacy.—By L——
G——. Bound in Calf and gilt back.

23. Love in a Bottle. A Poem, in
three Cantos. — By the E—— of M——.
Stitch'd in blue Paper.

24. Redivivus; or, Old Age and Gal-
lantry reconciled. A humorous Farce of
one Act. — By the E—— of H——.
Stitch'd.

25. An Exhortation to Hospitality to
Foreigners, even tho' it should happen to
be destructive to the Liberties of the Na-
tives. — By L—— T——, as he deliver'd
it at the Hay-Market. Bound in the
French Taste.

26. Criticisms on the Play of — Rule
a Wife and Have a Wife. — By L——
P——. In Boards.

27. The Fox weary of Goose-hunting. A Fable. — By the D— of D——. Bound in Parchment.

28. The Lover's Catechism. A new Ballad.—By the celebrated Miss A——.

29. An infallible Remedy for curing the Scotch Itch without Bleeding. — By the D— of A——.

30. The Beauties of domestic Life, illustrated with Examples. A Pastoral Eclogue. — By the D— of B—. Neatly bound.

31. Love levels all ; or, A lucky Trip to Bath. An Epic Poem without any Episodes. — By C—— B——. Printed on a half worn out letter, but very richly bound.

32. Instructions for a Supplement to Arthur Collins's Peerage of England. — By L— L——. Stitch'd in Marble Paper.

33. Verses in praise of Breeding. — By Miss W——.

34. True

34. True Magnificence. An Heroic Poem. — By the D— of M——. Finely bound.

35. Love in a Coach. A true Secret History. — By C—— V——. Stitch'd,

36. Second Thoughts best. A Philosophical Treatise, dedicated to a Brother of the Horn. — By Mr. W——. Bound in Sheeps skin.

37. The Triumvirate of Converts ; — being a series of Epistles on moral and religious Subjects, which pass'd between L— T——, C—— G——, and Mrs. C——. In Boards.

38. The Escape. A Satire. Inscrib'd to L— D—— M——, by a well-wisher to her Ladyship.

39. A Scheme intended to be offer'd to Parliament for the erecting Stock-jobbers into a Corporation, and having a Hall of their own to transact Business in, without going to Exchange-Alley. — By Mr. P——.

40. A Letter sent with a Side of Venison to the celebrated Mrs. J—— D——,
M 4 in

in the Piazza, Covent-Garden. — By
L — T — e.

41. A short Treatise concerning public and private Charities, proving to a Demonstration that the former are of much more Emolument to the Giver than the latter. — By L — E — J —. Curiously bound, with a Register.

42 The Humiliation. A Poem. Address'd to the Inexorables. — By L — G — S —. Stitch'd.

43. A Prophecy that Votes for Members of Parliament will fall to no Price at the next Westminster Election. — By Sir W — Y —.

Having folded and replaced this Paper in the pocket whence I had taken it, I proceeded to the others.

LETTER II.

“MADAM,

“**I**T must be confess'd that you are
“endow'd with a courage and resolu-
“tion superior to what most of your sex
“can boast of; but you must give me
“leave to say, at the same time, that in
“these affairs we men run much the
“greatest

“ greatest hazards; in case of a discovery,
“ our persons are liable to fall a sacrifice
“ to the resentment of an injur’d husband,
“ and our fortunes sure to be ruin’d by
“ way of reparation of his disgrace, —
“ whereas the worst you have to fear is a
“ divorce : — the laws are favourable to
“ wives, — the portion you brought with
“ you is either return’d, or an annuity
“ equivalent ; — and as for the little shame
“ you sustain by such a procedure, it is
“ well atton’d for by your being freed
“ from the loathsome careffes of the man
“ you hate, and at full liberty to pursue
“ your inclinations with him you love. —
“ Be assur’d, dear madam, I would venture
“ much for the continuance of the blessing
“ you permit me to enjoy ; but I find
“ the intercourse between us begins to be
“ suspected, and you must therefore pardon
“ me that I yield to necessity, and
“ refrain any farther meetings with you,
“ at least for the present : — I was yesterday
“ at Court, and heard some whispers
“ that your jealous coxcomb would soon
“ be sent abroad ; — if such a thing should
“ happen, as I have some pretty good
“ reasons to believe it will, I shall return
“ with double transport to your embraces,
“ ’till then prudence obliges me to deny
“ myself that happiness ; but at how
“ great a distance soever I keep my per-

“ son, I beg you will do me the justice
 “ to believe my heart is always with
 “ you, and that I can never cease to be,

“ With the greatest sincerity,

“ Dear MADAM,

“ Your most obliged,

“ And most faithfully

“ Devoted servant,

“ PHILETES.

“ P. S. I would not have you harbour
 “ any unjust suspicions, either of me or
 “ your fair friend, for upon my soul
 “ I never had the least design upon her
 “ in the way you mean; and you will
 “ find, whenever it is convenient for me
 “ to renew my devoirs to you, that I
 “ like no woman better than yourself. —
 “ Once more I bid you unwillingly
 “ adieu.

LETTER III.

“ Dear Creature,

“ YOUR Damon and my Strephon,
 “ as we call them, are both with
 “ me; — they have found out the most
 “ charm-

“ charming place that ever was for us to
“ scamper to, whenever we can delude
“ the eyes of our impertinent gaolers ;
“ — if you can find any excuse to get
“ loose from yours, the rendezvous agreed
“ upon is the banks of the Serpentine-
“ river, just after sun-set, whence we are
“ to follow our leaders where they shall
“ please to conduct us. — Lady Fillup
“ has a route to night, — you may tell
“ your tyrant you are going there ; but
“ why should I put pretences into a head
“ so much more fertile than my own ?
“ — Fail not to come, however, if it be
“ not a thing utterly impossible for hu-
“ man wit to accomplish ; but let us
“ know your resolution by the bearer.

“ I am,

“ With the most perfect amity,

“ My DEAR,

“ Your very obedient,

“ Humble servant,

“ CORRINNA.

“ P. S. While I was writing the above,
“ Damon, to shew either his love, or
“ wit, or both, took up a pen and em-
“ ploy'd it in the inclos'd.

To my Soul's Treasure.

“ **F**LY, charmer, fly, — leave home-
 “ bred cares behind,
 “ With thoughts of coming joys fill all
 “ your mind ;
 “ Let smiling pleasure wanton o'er your
 “ face,
 “ And kindling transports brighten ev'ry
 “ grace ;
 “ Each vein of mine beats high with
 “ love's alarms,
 “ Haste then, and lull me gently in your
 “ arms.

“ I know I am a bad poet, but you
 “ will find me a better lover, and that
 “ your charms are capable of inspiring
 “ me with more fire than all the ladies of
 “ Parnassus put together. I am,

“ With truth and tenderness,

“ My lovely dear,

“ Your most passionate,

“ And faithful adorer,

“ DAMON.”

The letter of Philetes, and that of Cor-
 rinna and Damon, being dated on the
 same

same day, discover'd to me that the lady who received them was not quite inconsolable for the loss of one lover as she had another in store; and also that she fail'd not to comply with the invitation of Damon, and that she had dropp'd her pocket at the rendezvous appointed by Corrinna.

I make no question but that the inquisitive reader would be glad to know the name and rank of this so much admir'd lady; but as I can do no more, at most, than guess at either, I should be loath to impose my bare and uncertain conjectures upon the public, for fear of a mistake, and being guilty of the worst of wrongs, that of prejudicing the character of an innocent person. — I wish every one would pay as much regard as myself to what Spakespear says on this occasion:

- ‘ Good name, in man or woman,
- ‘ Is the immediate jewel of our souls:
- ‘ Who steals my purse, steals trash: ’tis
- ‘ something, nothing;
- ‘ ’Twas mine, ’tis his, and has been slave
- ‘ to thousands;
- ‘ But he that filches from me my good
- ‘ name,
- ‘ Robs me of that which not enriches him,
- ‘ And makes me poor indeed.’

Could

Could I have form'd even the most distant supposition to what place Strephon and Damon had conducted their ladies, I doubt not but my curiosity would have carry'd me thither, where my enquiries might perhaps have gain'd me the satisfaction of knowing how much of the night these inamoratos had pass'd together, and in what manner they had been entertain'd; but no mention being made of any thing farther than the place where they were to meet, in Corrinna's letter, I was oblig'd to content myself with what discoveries I had made, and so must the reader also.

I cannot conclude this chapter without an observation which has constantly occur'd to me whenever any thing fell in my way of the kind I have been relating, — which is this: — as the wife has the honour of her husband in keeping, it seems to me a most ungenerous and cruel addition to the crime of wronging his bed, when by public indiscretions she exposes him to that contempt and ridicule which the world, though without the least shadow of reason or justice, is always sure to cast upon the husband of a transgressing wife.

I know.

I know very well that people are apt to say, — that when a woman abandons herself to vice she presently becomes utterly incapable of paying any regard to her own reputation, much less to that of her husband ;—and that it appears a much greater matter of surprise when they see women, as it must be confess'd many such there are, who, without being criminal in fact, behave in such a manner as to draw on themselves the severest censures.

Though I must allow that this too frequently happens, yet I cannot agree in opinion with those who seem to wonder it should be so, and look upon it as a kind of inconsistency in nature ; — I rather imagine that guilt is more likely to inspire circumspection ; — a woman who knows herself culpable, I should expect to be very careful not to do any thing in public that might cause suspicion of her being less reserv'd in private ; whereas a consciousness of innocence, especially in a thoughtless disposition, may easily render a woman unguarded, and less observant of those decorums, which, tho' not essential to virtue, are doubtless necessary to reputation.

C H A P. V.

Turns chiefly upon the subject of Education, and contains some things which the Author is apprehensive will not be very agreeable to the Female part of his readers, whether of the elderly or the more youthful class, yet may serve as a useful admonition to both.

THE good or the ill fortune of our whole lives chiefly depends on the first bent given to our minds in youth;—impressions made in our early years take a deep root within us, grow up with us to maturity, become part of ourselves, so that they may properly be call'd a second nature, and are seldom, if ever, totally eradicated. — According to one of our English poets,

‘ Children, like tender osiers, take the
 ‘ bow,
 ‘ And as they first are fashion’d, still will
 grow.’

For

For this reason it is that parents, unless they are very remiss indeed, take so much pride in the education of their children, bestowing on them every accomplishment befitting of their rank and circumstances, and oftentimes more than will well agree with either; — yet all this will not do, — there are some previous steps to be taken, without which all the improvements we can make, from the lessons of the most able masters, will never render us worthy the esteem of others, or truly happy in ourselves, for any length of time.

Pride, and an impatience of control, are the first propensities discoverable in human nature; — if these are humour'd and indulged in their beginnings, which is indeed in our most early years, they will soon become too headstrong and too turbulent to be afterwards restrain'd and subjected to the government of reason, by any methods whatever that can be taken for that purpose; — their first indications should therefore be carefully watch'd, and check'd in every instance.

I smile to think what objections are commonly made, by some over-fond parents, to such a manner of proceeding; —
it

if I am not mistaken these two are the principal; that to curb children too much is apt to break their spirits; and that the world being so full of disappointments, that few people escape them when they come to maturity, it is pity the poor things should know sorrow before their time; — to both which I take the liberty to make this reply:

First,—As to what they call the breaking of the spirit, — that due decorum I would recommend, takes no more of the spirit from the young master or miss than what is necessary to keep them from running into those follies and excesses which, how excusable soever in childhood, render them contemptible in riper years; — as the skilful gardener lops from his tender plant those superfluous branches, which, if suffer'd to continue, would hinder it from growing to perfection.

Then as to the second, — Every one knows the sorrows their little hearts are capable of feeling make no lasting impression on them, — they will cry one moment and laugh the next; — the contradiction they meet with, will only make them sensible that they neither can nor ought to expect they are to have their will in all things; and the trifling disappointments

pointments given them will enable them to sustain with fortitude those of more consequence which may hereafter possibly befall them.

A Boy is less liable to the danger of being spoil'd by too much indulgence than a Girl; because he is no sooner taken from the nursery than he is either put apprentice to some trade or calling; or, if of a superior rank, under the inspection of a grave and austere tutor; — that is, when the tender-mamma does not interfere, and give orders that no intense studies be imposed upon him, for fear of making his head ach; — but this seldom happens, — her husband, if she has one alive, will not endure his son shall be bred a dunce to please his wife, — whereas he meddles not with the education of his daughters, but leaves them to the direction of their mother.

The good lady, no doubt, is extremely ambitious that her daughter shall be one of the most accomplish'd young creatures in town; — to this end the best masters in their several sciences are employ'd to teach her Music, Dancing and French; — if she is well vers'd in these, — knows how to dress in the most becoming manner, and to give a genteel
turn

turn to an invitation on a card, she is look'd upon as complete in every necessary qualification ;— for as to any understanding in cookery, pastry, or needle-work, they are consider'd as vulgar things, and below the delicacy of a fine bred lady.

I have the honour to be pretty nearly related, by marriage, to lady Plyant, her late husband being my first cousin ; — decency obliges me to visit the widow sometimes ; — she is a very affable good natur'd woman, and has, indeed, a greater share of understanding than her too great compliance with the customs of the age will permit her to make shew of.

She keeps a prodigious deal of company, for which reason I see her much less frequently than otherwise I should do ; — but happening to pass by her house one day, when no coach nor chair was in waiting there, I ventur'd to knock at the door, and was glad to be told she was alone ; — I had not, however, been with her above ten minutes before two or three loud raps proclaim'd the approach of some new guest, and presently after a grave elderly lady was introduced.

Lady Plyant receiv'd her with much politeness and a great shew of friendship,
and

and after the first salutations were over, and we had refected ourselves, said to her,

Lady Plyant. ‘ Dear mrs. Loyter, I
‘ have not seen you this age, and have
‘ been quite unhappy in the want of you.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ Dear lady Plyant, the
‘ loss is wholly mine; — but I have been
‘ so embarrass’d; — my poor girl has
‘ been extremely indisposed.’

Lady Plyant. ‘ Bless me! — Miss not
‘ well, and I hear nothing of it! — But
‘ I hope she is better?’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ Perfectly recover’d,
‘ madam; — she will have the honour of
‘ waiting on your ladyship this evening;
‘ she is gone to make about half a dozen
‘ visits; but pray’d heartily to find no-
‘ body at home, that she might follow
‘ me here the sooner.’

Lady Plyant. ‘ How perfectly kind
‘ that was; — well, she is a charming
‘ creature; — you are the happiest wo-
‘ man in the world in having such a
‘ daughter: — I protest among all my
‘ acquaintance I do not know any young
‘ lady that comes up to her; — there is
‘ some-

‘ something so sweet, — so engaging, in
‘ every thing she does.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ She is infinitely oblig’d
‘ to your ladyship ;—indeed I have taken
‘ a great deal of pains with her ; for as I
‘ have nothing to do with my sons, they
‘ being all under their father’s manage-
‘ ment, and I have no other daughter,
‘ I should never have forgiven myself if I
‘ had not used my utmost endeavours to
‘ form her mind so as to make her as
‘ agreeable as possible to her acquaint-
‘ tance ; and, I thank Heaven, I have
‘ been pretty successful in it.

Lady Plyant. ‘ Oh, madam, the world
‘ must allow you have, — Miss is the
‘ darling of every body that knows her.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ The girl has a great
‘ deal of good nature, madam, and does
‘ not want a genius and capacity to
‘ mingle in conversation on almost any
‘ subject becoming a young lady to be
‘ acquainted with.’

I had been upon the wing to take my
flight almost from the moment Mrs.
Loyter came in ; but what was said in
relation to her daughter determin’d me to
stay ’till Miss should arrive, in order to
be

be convinced how far her person and behaviour corresponded with the high character had been given of her.

I waited, tho' not without some impatience, 'till abundance more had pass'd between these two ladies on the same subject, and on several other no less trifling, which as I cannot think the reader will be 'better pleas'd with than I was myself, I shall forbear to insert.

At length miss Loyter appear'd, and I stretch'd my eye-lids to their full extent to take in all the charms I had heard she was possess'd of; — the girl, indeed, was well enough; but I could discover nothing extraordinary about her; nor did her eyes or air give any indications of that sparkling wit her mother seem'd to boast of; but as I thought it unfair to give a verdict on mere appearances, I suspended my judgment on her understanding 'till I had more substantial proofs.

The discourse at first was only on where she had been, — who she had seen, — and how such and such a lady was dress'd; — I found miss talk'd very learnedly on this subject, and therefore was not without hope of hearing something from her equally lively on others of more importance;

tance ; but none being started I was compell'd to listen to the several animadversions made by these three ladies on caps and flounces, to my very great mortification, as any one who reads this work may easily suppose by what it discovers of my humour.

At last miss happening to say that she had met mrs. O—— in one of the visits she had been making, I presently catch'd up the word and said to her, —
' Then, madam, I doubt not but some
' conversation pass'd which you will do
' us a favour to repeat, as the lady you
' mention is perfectly acquainted with
' public affairs, and reasons upon them
' very justly.' — To which she made this answer :

Miss Loyter. ' So they say, sir ; but
' she was just going out when I came in ;
' I was heartily glad of it ; for I hate to
' hear a deal of stuff about things that I
' know nothing of.'

As I had a good share in the ensuing part of this conversation, I shall, to avoid confusion, repeat my own words as if spoke by another person.

Author.

Author. ‘ Then, madam, you have
‘ no relish for politics ?’

Miss Loyter. ‘ No truly, sir.— What
‘ business have I with the transactions of
‘ kings, and princes, and parliaments ?
‘ — It makes me sick to hear so much
‘ of wars, and treaties, and conventions,
‘ and taxes, and grievances, and such
‘ nonsense.’

Author. ‘ I must confess, madam, that
‘ the affairs of Europe are a little intri-
‘ cate at present, and may be puzzling to
‘ a lady’s comprehension ; — but I sup-
‘ pose you are well acquainted with the
‘ histories of former times.’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Lord, sir, what have
‘ I to do with former times ?’

Author. ‘ Every one, madam, has to
‘ do with the annals of the country they
‘ were born in.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ These things are quite
‘ out of my daughter’s way ; but for all
‘ that I can assure you, sir, she reads a
‘ great deal.’

Author. ‘ It would be pity, indeed,
‘ madam, so fine a young lady should be
‘ altogether ignorant of books : — I ima-
‘ gine therefore that miss’s genius soars
‘ to a higher pitch, — the wonders of
‘ the creation, so beautifully defined in
‘ some treatises of natural philosophy,
‘ perhaps are her favourite contempla-
‘ tions ; — I make no question but she
‘ has read *Le Spectacle de la Nature*.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ I believe not, sir. —
‘ Have you, my dear ?’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Not I, truly ; — but
‘ I have heard enough of it : — they say
‘ that there are four volumes of it taken
‘ up with nothing but a description of
‘ Trees, and Birds, and Beasts, and
‘ Fishes, and nasty Insects.’

Author. ‘ What do you think, madam,
‘ of Fontenelle’s *Plurality of Worlds*?’

Miss Loyter. ‘ O hang it, — I was
‘ never so disappointed in my life ; — I
‘ thought by the beginning, when I
‘ found a gentleman and lady were taking
‘ their promenade together by moon-
‘ light, that some pretty adventure would
‘ have ensued ; — but good God, the
‘ Author

‘ Author has made them talk of nothing
‘ but the Planets and the things that
‘ happen in the Sky.’

Author. ‘ I fancy then, miss, that
‘ Romances and Novels are chiefly your
‘ taste.’

Miss Loyter. ‘ I hate Romances, they
‘ are too tedious ; — as for Novels, I
‘ like some of them well enough, parti-
‘ cularly mrs. Behn’s ; — but I know not
‘ how it is, the Authors nowadays have
‘ got such a way of breaking off in the
‘ middle of their stories, that one forgets
‘ one half before one comes to the other.’

Author. ‘ Digressions, miss, when
‘ they contain fine sentiments and judi-
‘ cious remarks, are certainly the most
‘ valuable parts of that sort of writing.’

Miss Loyter. ‘ I cannot think so, and
‘ I could wish the Authors would keep
‘ their sentiments and remarks to them-
‘ selves, or else have them printed in a
‘ different letter, that one might know
‘ when to begin and when to leave off.’

Author. ‘ I presume, miss, you are
‘ fond of Poetry ?’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Not very fond ; — I
‘ can’t say I ever read much of it.’

Author. ‘ Then you can’t say whether
‘ you give the preference to the ancient
‘ or the modern ?’

Miss Loyter. ‘ No, really ; — I never
‘ thought about the matter.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ Sir, my daughter is
‘ not so vain as to set up for a critic, tho’
‘ I am pretty sure she knows more than
‘ she pretends to ; — I have heard some
‘ good judges allow her to have a very
‘ distinguishing taste in some of the Thea-
‘ trical representations.’

Miss Loyter. ‘ O I love a Farce or a
‘ Pantomime extravagantly ; — they are
‘ vastly diverting.’

Author. ‘ Then I suppose, miss, you
‘ see Plays merely for the Entertainments
‘ which so frequently succeed them ?’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Not entirely so ; —
‘ there are some Plays I like well enough ;
‘ but there are others so cramm’d with
‘ the words Liberty and Public Spirit,
‘ that they are quite surfeiting.’

Author.

Author. ‘ When there is too much of these things, madam, the Licence-Office knows how to correct them.’

Miss Loyter. ‘ There is Cato, for example, — some people cry it up ; but for my part I think it a piece of dull stupid stuff, excepting one scene between Portius and Lucia.’

I thought I had now sufficiently founded the genius and capacity of this young lady, therefore ceased to engross her any longer to myself, and soon after took my leave, secretly wondering at the strange partiality of mrs. Loyter in regard both of herself and daughter.

A few hours, however, made me begin to judge somewhat more favourably of these ladies ;— ‘ Tho’ mrs. Loyter, said I within myself, is mistaken in believing she has been able to make her daughter pass for a wit, her endeavours, notwithstanding, may have had better success in other accomplishments more essential to her happiness, — she may have made her a good œconomist, and perfectly acquainted with every thing requisite for the well managing a family.

I had the more reason to imagine that this young lady was train'd up in frugality and good housewifry, as I had been told that mr. Loyter lived to the height of his income, — that he saved no money, — had several sons, the eldest of whom, after his decease, was to run away with the estate; so that it could not be expected the daughter would have any fortune to entitle her to a husband at all suitable to her birth and the appearance she made.

But as I was always willing to be convinced whether my conjectures were right or wrong, I resolved to make an Invisible Visit to this family. — Just as I came to the house, mr. Loyter was going out, and the door being open'd for him I slipp'd in and went up stairs; — the old lady was sitting in the dining-room window with her spectacles on, very hard at work; — breakfast was but just over, as I found by the maid's removing the tea equipage, and Miss was gone up to dress, it seems; for she came down presently after in the same form I had seen her at lady Plyant's; — she ran directly to the great glass in order to examine how her petticoats hung at the bottom, — and then turn'd to her mother, and seeing what she was about said to her,

Miss.

Miss Loyter. ‘ Lord, mamma, have
‘ you not done mending my tippet yet!’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ Indeed, my dear, it is
‘ past mending;—you have torn the lace
‘ in twenty places, I believe, with those
‘ ugly pins in your stomacher; — I wish
‘ you would take more care of your
‘ things.’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Indeed I can’t be a slave
‘ to my cloaths.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ I would not have you,
‘ my dear; — but this vexes me, be-
‘ cause it is the only handsome tippet
‘ you have;—you must e’en try to coax
‘ your father to give you a couple of
‘ pieces to buy you another, the first
‘ time you find him in a good humour;
‘ — for I assure you I have not a single
‘ guinea in the world.’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Well, ’tis a shameful
‘ thing one has not money without ask-
‘ ing for, when one has a fancy to any
‘ thing. — But, mamma, can nothing be
‘ done with this lace?’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ It will never make up
‘ again in the shape it is; — but I be-
‘ lieve

‘ lieve I may contrive to make a handsome tucker out of it.’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Oh I shall like a tucker of it vastly ; — pray, mamma, do it as soon as you can : — I must go out and divert myself some where or other.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ Where, my dear ?’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Nay, — I have gone my round of visits twice over since any one of them has been return’d ; — I am only going to the next street to lady Lovetoy’s, to ask if Miss will take a walk with me in the Park.

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ Very well, my dear ; but do not stay too long, — your father brings company home to day, and we are to have a great dinner ; — Mr. Blossom, and his son just come from the University, are to be here, so I would not have you out of the way for the world ; — who can tell what may happen !’

Miss Loyter. ‘ Oh why did not I know that sooner, — I would have had on my new gauze cap ; — but ’tis no matter, — I will come home time enough to change it.’

With

With these words she snatch'd up her little muff and gallop'd down stairs, leaving her poor mother poring over the breaches she had undertaken to rectify ; — presently after a servant maid came into the room, and on mrs. Loyter's demanding what she wanted, made this reply :

Maid. ‘ I thought Miss had been here, madam ; — I came to desire she would lend a hand to make a crust for the venison, and beat a little spice for the puddings.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ ’Tis a sign, child, you came hither but last night ; — my daughter does not know how to make crust.

Maid. ‘ O dear, madam, any body may make a little paste to roast a piece of venison in.’

Mrs. Loyter. ‘ I tell you she knows nothing of cookery, nor I would not have her spoil her hands about it ; — but if you will bring me up the pestle and mortar I will beat your spice for you.’

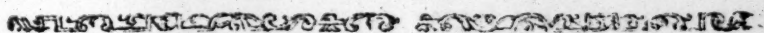
Maid. ‘ No, madam, — while I am
‘ fetching up the things, and carrying
‘ them down again, I can do it myself.’

The girl said no more, but went out of the room with a countenance which shew’d she was not very well pleased with the family she was come to serve : — I attended not the return of miss Loyer, — my curiosity was now fully satisfied, and I laid hold on the first opportunity I found to quit the house.

Methinks I hear how heartily the gay and witty part of my readers will laugh at the character of miss Loyter ; — they will certainly look upon her as a stalking, staring, stupid, noteless creature ; a moving piece of mere matter, uninform’d by any soul or spirit, — wholly incapable of deserving praise, and equally insensible of contempt ; — ’tis true she appears so, — yet may it not be owing so much to any deficiency of nature in her, as to the mistaken fondness of a mother, who fearing to give her a moment’s discontent neglected to rouse the native sluggishness of her faculties by any exercise or employment.

What

What therefore can be expected from a young person bred in a supine indolence, accustom'd to have her will in every thing, and scarce taught the difference between good and evil, should her whole life long act as chance, or what is as bad, her own undistinguishing fancy shall direct? — Bless all sober and thinking men from a wife of this cast.



CHAP. VI.

The Author expects will make a full atonement to the ladies for the too much plain dealing, as some of them may think, of the preceding chapter.

WOMEN and Wedlock are the common topics of ridicule among men, who, without one spark of genius or capacity, imagine themselves wits, and set up for such; but whatever either they, or some who even have a better way of thinking in other things, pretend to alledge against the sex, it is very evident, and must be confess'd, that nature has endow'd the minds of many women with as great and valuable talents as ever she bestow'd on men.

Numberless are the examples which might be brought from the records both of ancient and modern history, to prove the truth of this assertion, but I shall content myself with mentioning only a few, yet enough to make those unworthy maligners of a sex to which, they know in their own hearts, they are indebted for all the convenience and happiness of their lives, take shame to themselves and blush for what they have said.

Who is so ignorant as not to have heard of the fam'd Cornelia of Rome,—the mother of the Gracchi, — and the wife of Brutus, — the learned Hypatia of Greece, — the Boadicea and the Cartismuda of ancient Britain; — but 'tis needless to look back into such distant times, — the wife of the late Peter the Great of Muscovy, — the imperial heroine of Germany, — Signiora Laura of Italy,—and the present queens of Sweden and the Two Sicilies, are no less public than shining proofs of the capacity of a female mind.

And even here, in this degenerate island, where all wisdom and all virtue have been gradually decreasing for upwards of fifty years, there are not wanting

ing some, I may say many ladies, who in private, and almost obscure life, are possess'd of qualifications that might add lustre to the highest stations.

In fine, — there is nothing more certain, than that if the women, generally speaking, are less knowing than the men, it is only because they are deny'd the same advantages of education, and the mistaken mother lavishes her whole cares in embellishing the pretty person of her daughter, and gives no attention to the cultivation of her understanding.

I am happy in the acquaintance of a lady whom I shall distinguish by the name of Amadea; — she had been married very young to a gentleman whom she tenderly lov'd, and by whom she was no less belov'd; but had the misfortune to lose him at the age of twenty-five, and was at the same time the mother of three daughters, the eldest scarce four years old.

The land estate, which was very considerable, descended to the next male heir of the family, and all the personals, with a jointure of four hundred per annum, to the fair widow, and each of her children five thousand pounds.

The

The first three years of her widowhood she lived the life of a recluse, seldom stirring out of her own house, except to her devotions, or when the necessity of her affairs oblig'd her; — nor did she, with her mourning, throw this reserve entirely off; — tho' it is now full thirteen years since her dear husband's death, she neither visits nor receives visits as formerly, but confines her conversation to those of her kindred, or very long and intimate acquaintance; — never appears at any public diversion, and rejects even the first mention of proposals for a second marriage, though several very advantageous ones have been attempted.

All her cares have been turn'd on the education of her children, and all her pleasures center'd in observing the improvements they made by the instructions given to them; — she had never suffer'd their tender infancy to be frightened with idle stories of spirits and hobgoblins, nor amused with fairy tales; from their most early years she awak'd reason in them, and contriv'd it so, that even the little sports she indulged them in should some way or other conduce to that great end.

As they grew bigger she had masters to teach them music and dancing, the French and Italian languages, and as much of the Latin as was sufficient to make them speak and write English properly; but these politer studies were not to take up all their time, — the œconomy of domestic life she look'd upon as too necessary a qualification not to be well attended to, — some hours in every day were set apart for needle-work; and whenever the table was to be furnish'd with any thing extraordinary, they were sure to be put under the tuition of the cook, and frequently assisted her in those parts of her business which were the most delicate and least laborious.

Thus desirous of enriching their minds with every useful kind of knowledge, it cannot be supposed that books were out of the question, — no, — each of these young ladies takes upon her, in her turn, to read to the two others the whole time they are at work. — Baile's Dictionary may justly be call'd a Library of itself, as it gives a general insight into almost every remarkable occurrence that has happen'd in the world since the creation; and whenever they found any mention made of persons or transactions which gave

gave them a curiosity of being more fully acquainted with the particulars of, she sent immediately to her Bookseller for the history to which that passage referr'd.

But above all other things, this discreet mother was studiously watchful to prevent the pride and little vanities, so incident to human nature, from taking too fast hold of their young hearts;—sometimes she taught them, that nothing concerning themselves, except the embellishment of their minds, was worthy their attention; — that all cares relating to dress or person, beyond what cleanliness and decency requir'd, were superfluous and silly, and that every minute wasted at the toilet would rob them of some advantage they might otherwise receive.

I am well aware, that those of my fair readers who have been brought up in a different manner, which, by the way, I fear are much the greatest part, will be apt to cry out against the conduct of Amadea; — they will perhaps say, they wonder the poor girls are not mop'd, and that they must certainly be dull stupid creatures; — but those who think thus need only have a sight of the young ladies to be convinced of their mistake, — nothing can be more lively and spirituous
than

than all the three sisters, — smiles of innocence and joy dwell for ever on their faces, and denote an innate chearfulness and satisfaction, which all those hurrying pleasures, so eagerly pursued by others, have not the power of bestowing.

I made several Invisible Visits to them in their own apartment, and I know very few things capable of giving me a more sincere delight than I took in observing the behaviour of these young beauties, at times when they thought themselves entirely free from all inspection, and had no occasion to put any restraint upon their words or actions.

Never did I find them lolling out of the windows, or consulting their look or motions in the great glass; — never heard them complaining that they were not permitted to be the first in every new fashion; — never wishing to be in the Mall, or any other public place; — never wantonly giggling about love or lovers; — never quarreling with each other, or ridiculing the foibles of their acquaintance.

Sometimes I caught them playing and singing to their instruments, — at others amusing themselves with practising some new dance, and not seldom busily employ'd

ploy'd in needlework for the use of the family; and at the same time making such remarks as occur'd to them on some passage or other in history:—in fine, I could perceive nothing but what put me in mind of the three Graces, who, according to one of our poets, are actuated but by one soul, and that, — all harmony and sweet contentment.

The truth is, Amadea never makes use of any austerity, — the precepts she gives are only enforced by her own example, and deliver'd in such a manner as to steal themselves upon the mind, and have no need of any compunction from authority; — so that one may truly say,

Wisdom in her appears so bright and gay,
They hear with pleasure, and with pride
obey.

Happy the children who have such a mother; — happy the mother who has children such as these: — I am persuaded that many examples of this kind might be found, if parents would be at the pains to pursue the same measures Amadea did, and instil into their offspring the principles of virtue and wisdom before they knew what was meant by vice and folly.

C H A P. VII.

Contains the recital of an adventure, which, perhaps, will not be found the less, but the more interesting, for its being not altogether of so singular a nature as some others in this work may have appear'd.

I Was one morning taking my Invisible progression into those pleasant fields which lie behind Montague-House, not with the least view of making any discoveries, for I could expect none in that retired place, but merely to enjoy the benefit of the fresh air, which is almost constantly impregnated with various odours wafted from the adjacent gardens.

I had not walk'd many minutes, however, before I heard the tread of some persons close behind me ;—I stepp'd aside to let them pass, and saw that one of them was Narcissa, the only daughter of a gentleman who lived in that neighbourhood ; — the person who accompany'd her was her maid, as I soon after found by the following dialogue between them :

Narcissa.

Narcissa. ‘ Indeed, Betty, I think
‘ Capt. Pike shews but little love to let
‘ us be here before him.’

Betty. ‘ Oh, madam, you should con-
‘ sider that gentlemen in his post are not
‘ always masters of their time ; — you
‘ know he said he came to town on affairs
‘ of the regiment, — and something, per-
‘ haps, may have happen’d ; — but
‘ whatever it is that detains him it can-
‘ not be want of affection, I am so certain
‘ of that, I would pawn my life upon it.’

Narcissa. ‘ You are very confident,
‘ Betty, to offer such security for a man
‘ you have never seen but twice in your
‘ life.’

Betty. ‘ If I had never seen him but
‘ once, madam, I have seen enough to
‘ make me know that he loves you to
‘ distraction : — poor gentleman, — if
‘ he should not succeed in his addresses I
‘ am sure he has reason to curse me.’

Narcissa. ‘ Curse thee, Betty, — why
‘ curse thee ?’

Betty. ‘ He might never have seen
‘ you if it had not been for me. — Don’t
‘ you

‘ you remember, madam, how I teaz’d
‘ you to go into Jolliffe’s shop and buy
‘ the last new play ; — he was sitting
‘ reading when we came in, and I shall
‘ never forget how he threw down the
‘ pamphlet he had in his hand and stared
‘ at you, — and how he sigh’d ; — poor
‘ soul, he lost his heart from that very
‘ moment ; — then how he follow’d
‘ us into the Park ; — and how he
‘ trembled when he ask’d your leave to
‘ join us ?’

Narcissa. ‘ Pish, — that might be all
‘ affectation.’

Betty. No, madam, — no such mat-
‘ ter ; — the tongue may deceive one,
‘ but the eyes cannot ; — all his looks,
‘ while he was talking to you in the
‘ Mall, put me in mind of the descrip-
‘ tion Leonora gives of Torrismond in
‘ the play :

His very eye-balls trembled with his love,
And sparkled from their casements humid
fires ;

‘ And then, when you were so good to
‘ give him a meeting afterwards in the
‘ walk by Rosamond’s-Pond, how ten-
‘ derly he express’d himself ; — for my
‘ part,

‘ part, my heart melted at every word
‘ he said.’

Narcissa. ‘ He can talk moving
‘ enough, that’s certain ; — but yet,
‘ Betty, I ought not to be too hasty in
‘ giving credit to a man I know so little
‘ of, or what designs he may have upon
‘ me.’

Betty. ‘ Nay, madam, I think you
‘ know as much of him as you can do
‘ without being married to him : — Did
‘ not he tell you that his name was Pike,
‘ and that he was a Captain of Colonel
‘ *****’s Regiment ? — As to his de-
‘ signs, you cannot doubt of their being
‘ honourable, as he begg’d you would
‘ permit him to visit you, and ask your
‘ father’s leave to make his addresses.’

Narcissa. ‘ Ah, Betty, I wish such a
‘ thing could be, for he is a prodigious
‘ pretty fellow ;—but it is impossible, you
‘ know my father hates a soldier, — calls
‘ them a pack of locusts, and says they
‘ are the bane both of liberty and pro-
‘ perty ; — besides he has always design’d
‘ me for mr. Oakly.’

Betty. ‘ Ay, madam, and will make
‘ you have mr. Oakly too, or lead apes
‘ in

‘ in hell if you don’t take care to prevent
‘ it : — you know, madam, a very few
‘ days hence that abominable act will
‘ take place which deprives you of all
‘ liberty of chusing for yourself.’

Narcissa. ‘ Heigh hoe.’

Betty. ‘ Never sigh, madam, but re-
‘ solve.’

Narcissa. ‘ On what ?’

Betty. ‘ To run away from the mi-
‘ series of a forced marriage ; — to exert
‘ the spirit of a true-born Englishwoman,
‘ and be your own provider.’

Narcissa. ‘ How thou talkest !’

Betty. ‘ I talk nothing but reason,
‘ madam ; — but here comes one who I
‘ fancy will be able to urge it more effec-
‘ tually.’

The person whom she had been so
strenuously pleading for now appear’d, —
he was a tall well-made man, and had a
good soldierly aspect ; but yet I thought I
discover’d something about him that shew’d
as if he had not always been accusom’d
to wear the rich cloaths he now had on ;
— there

— there wanted that easy freedom in his air, which, in my opinion, chiefly denotes the true-bred gentleman, and I presently set him down in my mind, either for an impostor, or one whom some lucky chance had elevated far above his birth.

He approach'd Narcissa with a low bow, and after taking hold of one of her hands and kissing it with the greatest fervency, address'd her in these terms :

Capt. Pike. ' How miserable have I
' been, my angel, in being kept thus
' long from your divine presence !'

Narcissa. ' I do not doubt, sir, but
' you have been better engag'd.'

Capt. Pike. ' Cruel supposition. —
' How can you so far wrong your own
' transcendent charms, or my profound
' adoration of them, as to imagine that
' the whole world has any thing in it
' which I should put in competition with
' the blessing I now enjoy ? — but the
' Major of our Regiment is in town, and
' unluckily sent for me this morning, —
' we subalterns must obey our command-
' ing officer ; but I hope in a few months
' to be Colonel, and I shall then have
' leisure to lie eternally at your feet.'

Betty.

Betty. ‘ Ah, sir, I am afraid before
‘ that time my lady will be obliged to
‘ have somebody else lie at her feet.’

Capt. Pike. ‘ How !’

Narcissa. ‘ Hold your prating, hussy.
‘ — Who gave you the privilege of
‘ speaking ?’

Betty. ‘ Madam, the respect I have
‘ for you will not suffer me to be silent.
‘ — I tell you nothing but the truth, sir ;
‘ — as soon as this cursed Clandestine
‘ Marriage-bill takes place, which you
‘ know will be next Monday, my lady
‘ will be forced to marry a man to whom
‘ she has the greatest aversion.’

Capt. Pike. ‘ Oh Heaven ! — so near
‘ being torn from all my hopes ! — And
‘ can you, madam, — can a lady of your
‘ delicacy submit to loath’d embraces !’

Narcissa. ‘ Sir, this foolish wench
‘ talks she knows not what ; — the act
‘ she mentions does not empower my
‘ father to drag me to the Altar, — it
‘ only hinders me from chusing for my-
‘ self ; — I may live single if I please.’

Capt. Pike. ‘Live single! — Heaven
 ‘ forbid that so much youth and beauty
 ‘ should be condemn’d to a cold celibacy!
 ‘ — No, — nature endow’d you not with
 ‘ such superior charms but to bless some
 ‘ man who by his abundant love might
 ‘ make him worthy of them. — Oh that
 ‘ I were the happy he!’

Narcissa. ‘Think not of it, Captain,
 ‘ — my father would never give his con-
 ‘ sent to any one but the person he has
 ‘ made choice of for me, much less
 ‘ would he endure to see me wedded to a
 ‘ gentleman in the army.’

Capt. Pike. ‘And have you too that
 ‘ implacable aversion to a sash and
 ‘ crocket?’

Narcissa. ‘I will not pretend to say
 ‘ I have; — I think the army our only
 ‘ security in time of war, and the greatest
 ‘ ornament of our country in times of
 ‘ peace.’

Capt. Pike. ‘Oh then, if I could
 ‘ flatter myself there was nothing in my
 ‘ person more disagreeable to you than in
 ‘ my function, I should have nothing left
 ‘ to fear.’

Narcissa.

Narcissa. ‘ Yes, indeed, you would, fir, a great deal; for I assure you, if I married you, my father would not give me a groat.’

Capt. Pike. ‘ Let him keep his dirty trash, — I despise money, — the commission I enjoy at present will keep us above contempt, and I have money in the Bank ready to purchase the first vacant command of a regiment.’

Narcissa. ‘ Can you imagine I would give myself to a man who has but just begun to tell me that he loves me?’

Capt. Pike. ‘ My whole life shall be but one continued scene of courtship; — be assured I shall not be the less, but the more, infinitely the more your adorer by being your husband; — oh then be just to my ardent passion, — generously put an end to my despair, and let those divine lips pronounce the happy fiat to my wishes.’

Narcissa. ‘ Bless me, what would the world say of such a thing!’

Capt. Pike. ‘ The wife, madam, despise all forms. — Do not kings and
O 2 ‘ princes

‘ princes marry even with those whom
‘ they never saw before ; — besides, the
‘ late proceedings of the legislature lays
‘ you under a necessity of coming to a
‘ speedy resolution.’

Betty. ‘ Ay, madam, remember the
‘ Act.’

Capt. Pike. ‘ Ay, madam, consider
‘ how soon that fatal Monday will arrive,
‘ which takes from you the power of
‘ snatching from eternal misery the man
‘ who loves you more than life, and
‘ would sacrifice every thing for you.’

Narcissa. ‘ I must confess, Captain,
‘ your offering to take me without a for-
‘ tune demands some gratitude on my
‘ part ; and if — but no more, — I see
‘ a lady yonder whom I would not wish
‘ should surprise us in this conversation ;
‘ this evening you shall know my final
‘ resolution. — Where can I send to you ?’

Capt. Pike. ‘ I have an appointment
‘ with some young officers this afternoon
‘ at Will’s Coffee-house, Whitehall, and
‘ shall there wait my doom with the
‘ most ardent impatience ; — but be-
‘ fore you pass the irrevocable sentence of
‘ my

‘ my fate, think, — oh think, my life
‘ or death depends upon it!’

Narcissa. ‘ Well, well, — be easy; —
‘ but go.’

Capt. Pike. ‘ I must obey; — may
‘ love and all its powers plead for me, and
‘ atone for this cruel interruption.’

He said no more, but turn’d away as
his mistress had commanded, and pass’d
on to another part of the field, while she
advanced to meet the lady she had men-
tion’d; but Betty, who was heartily vex’d
at this accident, could not forbear crying
out as they went along,

Betty. ‘ I wonder what should bring
‘ Marilla here?’

The words were either not heard, or
not regarded by Narcissa, who, I could
perceive by her looks, was little less dis-
concerted; — she met her friend, how-
ever, with a shew of gaiety and satisfaction,
and as soon as they came near each other
saluted her in these terms:

Narcissa. ‘ My dear Marilla, ’tis a
‘ wonder to see you in such a place as
O 3 ‘ this;

‘ this ; — you used to be an enemy to all
‘ solitary walks.’

Marilla. ‘ So I am still ; but I have
‘ been at your house and was told you
‘ were here, so came in mere good-na-
‘ ture to hinder you from indulging me-
‘ lancholy ; but I find I might have
‘ spared myself that trouble. — Pray who
‘ was that pretty fellow that left you just
‘ now ?’

Narcissa. ‘ I know not ; — he only
‘ came up to us, seeing nobody else in
‘ the place, I suppose, to ask which was
‘ the nearest way to Great Russel-street.’

Marilla. ‘ Rather to ask the way to a
‘ fair lady’s heart who lives not far from
‘ Great Russel-street. — Oh, Narcissa,
‘ you cannot deceive me ; — I could easily
‘ perceive, at the distance I was, that he
‘ did not part from you with the air of a
‘ man who had no other business than to
‘ ask such an impertinent question : — be-
‘ sides, I must tell you that you are a
‘ very ill dissembler, — your blushes, and
‘ the soft confusion in your eyes, declare
‘ not only that he is a lover, but also
‘ that he is a favour’d one ; I know well
‘ enough that you met him here by ap-
‘ pointment.

‘pointment. — Prithee let me into the
‘whole of the secret.’

Narcissa still persisted in her first asse-
verations; but the other seem’d not to
give the least credit on that score, and
assuming a more serious air than hitherto
she had put on, spoke thus:

Marilla. ‘I perceive, my dear Nar-
‘cissa, I am not thought worthy of your
‘confidence in this point, tho’ I am very
‘certain you have not a friend in the
‘world who wishes your happiness with
‘more sincerity than I do.’

Narcissa. ‘I believe it, my dear, and
‘am much obliged to you; but you
‘would not have me tell lyes to shew my
‘gratitude.’

Marilla. ‘Well, — well, — I shall
‘urge you no farther, and should not
‘have been so impertinent to take any
‘notice of what I saw, but for the trans-
‘port it gave me to imagine you might
‘now have an opportunity of delivering
‘yourself from the danger of being forced
‘into a marriage with a man whom I
‘have heard you declare so great an aver-
‘sion for.

Narcissa. ‘ And suppose the thing
‘ were really as you have taken it into
‘ your head to fancy, would you have
‘ me disoblige my father by marrying
‘ without his consent?’

Marilla. ‘ Yes, when he will give
‘ his consent to no body but one with
‘ whom you must be miserable; — for
‘ besides the dislike you have to the per-
‘ son of Oakly, his temper is such as
‘ would break a woman’s heart in two
‘ months. — You know I am very inti-
‘ mate with his sister, and cannot avoid
‘ seeing such oddities in his behaviour as
‘ have made me tremble for you a thou-
‘ sand times.’

Narcissa. ‘ I cannot think my father
‘ will ever go about to compel my in-
‘ clinations.’

Marilla. ‘ Oakly is of another opi-
‘ nion; for I can tell you he makes no
‘ scruple to say, that if you do not marry
‘ him you shall marry no body; — there-
‘ fore, without diving into the secrets of
‘ your heart, let me advise you, my dear
‘ creature, not to lose the short time al-
‘ low’d you, but if you have any offer
‘ less disagreeable to you than Oakly, ac-
‘ cept

‘cept it at once, — three days hence it will be out of your power.’

Narcissa. ‘But, my dear, what man that is worth having will marry a woman without a fortune?’

Marilla. ‘If I were a man I should tell you that your person was a sufficient fortune, and I do not doubt but that there are a great many who would think so; — but you have two thousand pounds left you by your grandmother, independent of your father, and I dare say that if you were once married, and the thing past recal, he would forgive it; — consider you are his only daughter, and both your brothers are provided for, the one by an estate, and the other by good preferment in the church.’

What answer *Narcissa* would have made I know not, it began to rain very fast, so that the ladies were oblig’d to mend their pace and make all the haste they could out of the field; — *Marilla* took the first chair she met with, saying it would be dinner-time before she should be able to get dress’d; — *Narcissa* and her maid ran home through the shower, and I follow’d, not only to take shelter,

but also to hear the result of the young lady's determination on what had pass'd between her and capt. Pike.

As soon as they had pluck'd off their wet hats and capuchins, and Narcissa had a little resettled herself, she said to her maid,

Narcissa. ' Well, Betty, — this has been an odd morning.'

Betty. ' I hope it will prove a lucky one, madam ; but I am glad you did not tell Marilla any thing of the matter.'

Narcissa. ' She was so pressing that I had half a mind ; but when I consider'd how great she is with Oakly's sister, I thought it was better to keep her in ignorance.'

Betty. ' Much better, indeed, madam. — But pray what do you resolve to do in relation to the Captain ?'

Narcissa. ' Why I must e'en have him, I think.'

Betty. ' You made him a kind of promise to send to him.'

Narcissa.

Narcissa. ‘ I did so, and will keep it ;
‘ — bring me some paper and pen and
‘ ink, — I will write to him this moment,
‘ before any company comes in to pre-
‘ vent me.’

Betty. ‘ You are in the right, madam,
‘ — there is nothing like the time pre-
‘ sent.’

The things she call’d for being imme-
diately set before her, I stood at her elbow
and saw her write the following lines :

To Capt. PIKE.

“ S I R,

“ I Should be guilty of an injustice both
“ to myself and you not to be sensible
“ of the proof you offer of your sincerity ; — I find in it, indeed, all that can
“ be imagin’d, and much more than could
“ be expected, of love, of honour, and
“ a true generosity, and hope I shall
“ hereafter stand excused to my father
“ and the whole world, for taking a step
“ excited by my gratitude, and approv’d
“ of by my reason ; — meet me there-
“ fore to-morrow morning at eight pre-
“ cisely, in the Piazza next King-street,
“ Covent-Garden, where I will put my-

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“ a true generosity, and hope I shall
“ hereafter stand excused to my father
“ and the whole world, for taking a step
“ excited by my gratitude, and approv’d
“ of by my reason ; — meet me there-
“ fore to-morrow morning at eight pre-
“ cisely, in the Piazza next King-street,
“ Covent-Garden, where I will put my-

“ self under your protection, and be conducted by you to whatever place you shall judge most proper for the ceremony which must make me

“ Eternally yours.

“ NARCISSA.”

Having seal'd this billet she gave it to her maid, with a strict charge to send it by a trusty messenger ; on which the girl reply'd,

Betty. “ Yes, madam, you may depend on the safe conveyance ; for I will be the bearer of it myself.”

Narcissa. “ What ! — go to a coffee-house !”

Betty. “ Nothing is more common, madam, than for women to send for gentlemen out of a coffee-house when they have any business with them.”

What farther chat pass'd between the mistress and maid was too insignificant to be repeated ; nor, indeed, did I stay to hear much of it, having already gain'd all that was necessary for the present, so shut up my Tablets and retir'd on the first opportunity.

opportunity I found for my leaving the house.

As it was plain to me, however, that Betty was deeply interested in the concession Narcissa had made to the Captain, and I had also some suspicion that he was not in reality the person he pretended to be, I resolved to go in the evening to the coffee-house, and be witness of his behaviour on receiving the letter Betty was to bring.

Accordingly I went and found him there, not as he said, in company with young officers, but sitting alone in a corner of the room with his hat very much flapp'd over his face; — a few minutes after I came in, a waiter call'd aloud to know if one capt. Pike was there, — on which he started up, and, answering to the name, was told a gentlewoman at the door desir'd to speak with him; — he went hastily out and I pursued his steps, not doubting but it was the emissary of Narcissa; — as soon as he saw it was she, he cry'd out in some surprise :

Capt. Pike. ‘What, sister, are you come yourself! — You bring me no bad news, I hope.’

Betty.

Betty. ‘ No, no, — the best you can
‘ expect ; — but walk this way, — ’tis
‘ not proper to stand here to talk. — For
‘ Heaven’s sake why did you venture to
‘ appoint such a public place as this !’

Capt. Pike. ‘ No body knows me here,
‘ — my Captain never uses this house.
‘ — But tell me, how goes our affair ?’

Betty. ‘ Rarely ; — she will have you,
‘ here is her promise under her own hand.’

By this time they were got about the middle of Scotland-yard, where Betty having given him the letter of Narcissa, he stopp’d to read it by the light of a lamp at a gentleman’s door, and as soon as he had finish’d cry’d out,

Capt. Pike. ‘ This is brave, indeed,
‘ and nothing surer was ever so lucky as
‘ her fixing to-morrow for our wedding,
‘ for the Captain went to Hampstead
‘ this morning with a whore he pick’d
‘ up in the Park the other night, and
‘ will not be in town these two days, so
‘ I shall have all that time to myself, and
‘ can get at what cloaths and linnen I
‘ want. — But, my dear sister, what shall
‘ I do

‘ I do with this girl when I have married her? — where must I carry her?’

Betty. ‘ That is what I came to talk about: — You must take a fine lodging for her by all means, and order a handsome dinner to be provided at some tavern or other; — every thing must be done with a grand air, that she may suspect nothing ’till after you have consummated. — Hah, brother.’

Capt. Pike. ‘ But, Betty, I have no money; — all will go wrong still if you cannot help me out.’

Betty. ‘ Nothing would go right if it were not for me; — you may thank God for having such a sister, you might have been a foot-soldier else as long as you lived; — but there is no time to be lost, — I have brought you four pieces, and I believe that will be sufficient for every thing; — go and buy a ring and secure a lodging immediately.’

Capt. Pike. ‘ You may be sure I shall not fail. — But harkye, Betty, take care she brings the writings of her two thousand pounds and all her jewels.’

Betty.

Betty. ‘ Ay, ay, — she shall leave
‘ nothing of value behind her I’ll engage.’

With these words they separated, and I went home, heartily glad that I had made this discovery, and determin’d to save Narcissa, if possible, from the misfortune she was so near falling into, — to which end I sat down to my escrutore and immediately wrote to her father in the following terms :

To JOHN *****, Esq;

“ S I R,

“ **T**HE shock I am now about to
“ give you can only be excused by
“ its being done to prevent you from re-
“ ceiving a much greater and more last-
“ ing one :—sorry am I to tell you,—yet
“ so it is, — your daughter, the beautiful
“ Narcessa, is on the point of utter de-
“ struction ; — she has promised, and is
“ resolved to keep her word, to join her-
“ self in marriage with a wretch, who,
“ tho’ of the most abject rank, in order
“ to seduce her innocence, assumes the
“ character of a gentleman, and calls
“ himself capt. Pike ; — Betty, her wait-
“ ing-maid, is sister to the impostor, and
“ has been the conductress of the whole
“ villainous

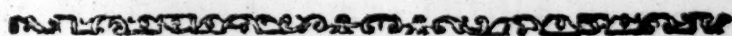
“ villainous design ; — every thing is
“ prepared for the accomplishment, and
“ to-morrow is the day prefix’d ; — but
“ I hope this intelligence will reach you
“ time enough to prevent so irremediable
“ an evil.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your unknown well-wisher

“ And humble servant.”

Having sent this away, and fully discharged what my honour and my conscience represented as a duty incumbent on me, I flatter’d myself with the expectation of seeing the next day treachery and deceit receive the mortification they justly merited.



C H A P. VIII.

Contains a brief account of the effects that were produced by the good intentions of the Invisible Spy, with some other subsequent particulars.

TH O’ I had not the least room to doubt but that the information I had given the father of Narcissa would have all the success I wish’d, yet I could not avoid

avoid being extremely curious to see in what manner the persons concern'd would behave on this occasion ;— accordingly I went to the house the next morning about eleven, expecting to find that the maid had been turn'd out of doors, the mistress in tears for her disappointment, and the old gentleman rejoicing in the thoughts of having saved his beloved daughter from undoing herself.

A servant happening to be at the door receiving some shoes from a fellow who had been just cleaning them, I gain'd an easy access ; — finding no body in the lower floor I went up stairs, but the same solitude reign'd likewise there ; — I then proceeded a story higher, and there saw only a servant-maid sweeping out a room, which, by a toylet being set out, I judg'd was the chamber of Narcissa : — I was very much surpris'd to find every thing so quiet in a place where I had look'd for nothing but confusion, and stopp'd on the stairs to consider what might be the occasion ; when on a sudden I heard the ringing of a small bell, and presently after saw a footman running hastily up ; — I follow'd him where he went, which was into the chamber of Narcissa's father, who was not yet up, but now call'd for his cloaths ; — as he was putting them
on.

on he cast his eyes on the table, and seeing a letter lie there, ask'd his man — when, and from whom it came; — to which he reply'd,

Footman. ‘ Sir, it was left for you
‘ last night by a porter; but as you came
‘ home so late I would not disturb you
‘ with it.’

Father. ‘ Give it me.’

I was astonish'd on finding that this was no other than the letter I had sent to him; but more troubled, that by the delivery of it being delay'd, poor Narcissa had fallen into the trap laid for her; — but if I, a stranger, could be so much affected, what agony must rend the tender father's heart? — scarce had he gone thro' the half of what I wrote before he cry'd out, casting at the same time a look full of despair and rage upon his servant,

Father. ‘ Ill-fated wretch! what mischief, what ruin, has thy neglect
‘ brought upon me and my family! —
‘ You imagin'd I was drunk last night, I
‘ suppose; but had I been so, here is
‘ enough in this dreadful letter to have
‘ brought me to my senses: — but go, —
‘ run

‘ run up to my daughter’s chamber, —
‘ see if she be there.’

Footman. ‘ Sir, she went out very
‘ early this morning with mrs. Betty, and
‘ is not yet come back.’

Father. ‘ Nor ever will, I fear: —
‘ the intelligence this brings me is too
‘ true, I find. — Run to mr. Oakly and
‘ my counsin Johnson’s, bid them both
‘ come to me this instant! — fly! — and,
‘ do you hear, bring a coach with you;
‘ — if I can recover her before consum-
‘ mation, her ruin may be yet prevented.’

The fellow went on his errand, and the old gentleman in the mean time stamping, biting his lips, and showing all the marks of an inward distraction, made an end of putting on his cloaths, in order to go in search of his lost daughter when the gentlemen he had sent for should arrive; but I staid not to hear what method would be pursued for that purpose, as thinking it of no moment, and that it would be better to return again in the evening, when I might probably hear what success had attended their endeavours.

The time I chose for going, was as late at night as I thought I might get an opportunity

portunity of entering, yet the disconsolate father was but just come home, — his two friends were with him, — they said all they could to alleviate his sorrows, but it avail'd no more than preaching to the winds. — They had found out, it seems, where the marriage was perform'd ; after which they went to all taverns, coffee-houses, and other public places which they heard were frequented by officers, to enquire concerning one who call'd himself capt. Pike, but could not receive the least information of any one who bore that name ; and all the consolation the old gentleman had for the pains he had taken, was the cruel certainty that his dear daughter was inevitably undone.

Though I saw very little probability of my being able to learn any thing more at this house than I had already done, yet I could not forbear calling constantly there every day, and at last, by this dint of continued application, I became acquainted with the whole melancholy secret of Narcissa's fate, almost as soon as the family knew it themselves.

The pretended Captain had manag'd every thing according to the direction of his sister ; — as soon as the ceremony was over, he had conducted his
bride

bride to very handsome lodgings, where an entertainment suitable to the occasion was provided; and the poor deluded young lady, seeing nothing but what serv'd to make her satisfied with what she had done, in return for his imaginary generosity made him a present of her two thousand pounds, which was in India Bonds.

Her contentment might, perhaps, have lasted some little time longer than it did, if she had not propos'd waiting on her father, to implore his forgiveness and blessing; on which the impostor, having now got his ends, thinking it needless to continue the deception any longer, confess'd that he was no more than a private man in the army; but told her that he was now treating with his Captain for his discharge, and would purchase a commission with some part of the money she had given him; and added, that 'till these two points were accomplish'd, it would be altogether improper to appear before her father.

Narcissa fell into the utmost distraction on this eclaircissement, — vow'd not to live with a wretch who had put so base a trick upon her, but would go home to her father, who she doubted not but
would

would find means to punish such a flagrant piece of villainy.

He only laugh'd at her reproaches, and said, that as she was his wife she had it not in her choice to leave him.—Betty also now threw off the character of a servant, and, assuming the authority of the sister of her husband, pretended to rebuke her idle prating, as she insolently term'd it.

She found an opportunity, however, of making her escape, and fled for refuge to the house of a near relation, who, on hearing her story, undertook to intercede with her father, which he did so successfully, that the old gentleman forgave and took her again into favour.

All possible measures were taken to set aside the marriage, and compel the impostor to refund the money Narcissa had so unwarily bestow'd upon him; but as he knew the law was too much on his side, having not married her in a false name, tho' under a false character, he carry'd things with a very high hand, would part with nothing, not even the jewels she had left behind, but even threaten'd to commence a process against any one who detain'd her person.

In fine, all that could be done was to get him to sign articles of separation, — after which Narcissa retir'd into the country, where I hear she resolves to waste the whole remainder of her days in a melancholy contrition, for the rashness of her ungovern'd conduct. — So true, though not very elegant, are some lines which I remember to have read in an old poem, call'd, *The Card of Fancy* :

- ' When headstrong youth the reins of
- ' duty breaks,
- ' And its own course pursues in def-
- ' p'rate freaks, -
- ' It certain mischief and destruction
- ' seeks.

I must not forget to let my readers know that Marilla is since married to Mr. Oakly, with whom, as I am credibly inform'd, she was long passionately in love, and on that motive used the utmost of her endeavours to strengthen the aversion her fair friend had for him.

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End of the Third VOLUME.

